



Agudas Achim Congregation

401 E. Oakdale Blvd., Coralville, IA 52241

Phone: 319.337.3813

www.AgudasAchimIC.org

Special Pesach Guide 2025 / 5785

All Pesach services will be streamed [at our standard Zoom link for services.](#)

Sunday, April 6	Peace & Justice Seder (Senior Center)	Seder at 6:30 p.m. Requires RSVP.
Tuesday, April 8	Seder Swap & Recipe Rollout	Event at 6:00 p.m.
Saturday, April 12	1st Seder (at people's homes)	No service
Sunday, April 13	Festival Morning Service (1st day)	Service at 9:30 a.m.
Sunday, April 13	Communal Second Seder (Synagogue)	Seder at 6:30 p.m. Requires RSVP.
Monday, April 14	Festival Morning Service (2nd day)	Service at 9:30 a.m.
Friday, April 18	Shabbat & Festival Evening Service	Service at 7:00 p.m.
Saturday, April 19	Shabbat & Festival Morning Service	Service at 9:30 a.m.
Sunday, April 20	Festival Morning Service (8th day, Yizkor)	Service at 9:30 a.m.

'Mah nishtanah ha'lailah ha'zeh mikol ha'leilot?' – 'How is this night different from all other nights?' the Haggadah asks us, and we are prone to answer in the past tense: thousands of years ago, on a full moon, our ancestors (physical or spiritual), bundled their meager belongings and unleavened breads together, picked up their youngest and frailest and slipped out of Mitzrayim, Egypt, 'the House of Bondage.' Passover night commemorates this, of course, and sets it in a timeless and thoughtful ritual.

However, there is another way the Haggadah would like us to answer the question: in the present tense. As my husband likes to teach at our home Seder, Seder night is a time machine, in which the timelines of the past, present and future are collapsed in one multisensory, synesthetic, rich experience. When we reflect on our lives and moments right now, we can identify how they are different, from year to year. How will the Passover

of 5785 / 2025 be different from last year or next year? And in that differential, are we moving the needle of the clock closer towards our collective redemption? That is the question we sit with.

Of course, when it comes to our personal trajectories, we can easily identify change. Some of us feel older, others are ready to sing their first Mah Nishtanah. Some of us come to our tables having struggled with our health, others having marked significant milestones. Some of us may be new to this community; others may reminisce on decades of connectedness to Agudas Achim and the wider Jewish world.

And when it comes to our local, national and global trajectories, we can identify change as well. We live in a fast-moving and chaotic time; a stress test for the very values the Haggadah seeks to uphold. Will we see Seder night as a citadel of comfort and consolation, or as a fortress from which we step

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into the cause of justice—or perhaps both all at once? The words may ring out to rouse us, accuse us, inspire us, embrace us and hold us. We see the images of the past and present superimposed on each other. The continued battle for the rights of immigrants and refugees. The urgent call to care for the poor, the people and the planet. An invitation to reflect on our power: when we don't have it and when we do, identifying when we feel Pharaoh's whip and perhaps when we confess to our own Pharaonic hardened hearts. A reckoning with both the small and large things we may feel enslaved to, be it the screens in the palm or our hands or the intoxication of always having 'more.' A rallying of loved ones and strangers seated in our living rooms and dining rooms, basking in the glow of the festival. A vision of a better, kinder world, where the dignity of both of our Jewishness and our humanity is upheld, and where we uphold it for others.

'Mah nishtanah' – how are things different? We are in need of courage and resolve, compassion and resilience. We feel moved to protect democracy, maintain civil society and through small acts of kindness, remind ourselves and each other that Passover's truest vision is worth living for. Pick up your Haggadah and see it as a time machine, a road map, a recipe book for transformation. I bless all of us to be touched by the wisdom, beauty and power of this season. Next year, if not 'in Jerusalem', if not in a redeemed world, we will be here again, excavating the rich resources of this holiday, the great Master Story of our tradition, and passing on its flame.

Chag kasher v'sameach, wishing you a kosher and happy Passover.

Peace and Justice Seder

Elsewhere in this Bulletin, you will find a poster for information for our 'public space' Peace and Justice Seder. This is the Seder's sophomore year—last year, we launched it to great success (about 90 people attended).

This year's Peace and Justice Seder will be happening at 6:15 pm on Sunday the 6th of April at

the Senior Center. The Peace and Justice Seder will look at issues of social justice and transformation both at home and abroad and is a humanist, interfaith, open-to-all Potluck offering to the local Iowa City community. It is an excellent opportunity to wrestle with meaningful text, connect it to the issues of our time and to invite Jewish, Jew-ish and non-Jewish friends to experience a (modified, creative and interactive) Seder.

The Seder is free—we ask that you bring a dish to share that is 'kosher for Passover-ish' (so no pastas, cookies, cakes or breads) and which can be served at room temperature. Volunteers for set-up and clean-up, as well as to do a reading or song, are always welcome.

Do you wish to attend? Please RSVP to rsvp@agudasachimic.org and put 'Peace Seder' or 'Peace and Justice Seder' in the header so that we don't confuse your RSVP with the Second Seder held at Agudas Achim.

Do you wish to volunteer? Please get in touch with Rabbi Esther at rabbi@agudasachimic.org or Lisa Heineman at adulded@agudasachimic.org

Places are limited but you are welcome to share this invitation widely with your contacts, friends and family!

First Seder Night and Hospitality Match-Making

Not every individual or family at Agudas Achim has a place to go to for First Seder Night and this can be a lonely and isolating experience. We would like to break that isolation and make sure everyone who wants a place at a home Seder can have one.

Would you either like to host an individual or family or be hosted? Please email Rabbi Esther at rabbi@agudasachimic.org (list any dietary practices and restrictions, both for guests and hosts, and include number you can host/number you need hosted), and we will work to find you a match!

An advanced thanks to all hosts for making our community truly a welcoming and inclusive one!

Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz

PESACH RESOURCES

General:

[Hebcal's full set of Passover dates for this year, including Torah readings](#)

[MyJewishLearning Passover Resources](#)

[The Coffee Shop Rabbi](#)

Reform:

[Reform Movement Passover Resources](#)

[Mishkan HaSeder, the Reform Haggadah which we will use for the Second Seder](#)

[Family-friendly Haggadah by Rabbi Amy Scheinerman](#)

[Resources from the CCAR \(Central Conference of American Rabbis\)](#)

Resources from the Union of Reform

Judaism:

[Video: How to Make Matzah at Home](#)

[How to Recite or Sing the Four Questions](#)

[A Guide to Eating on Passover](#)

Conservative:

[Rabbinical Assembly 5784 Pesach Guide](#)

[YouTube video on how to prepare your kitchen for Passover](#)

Resources for Children:

[PJ Library Passover](#)

[Coloring Book Haggadah](#)

[Books for Kids](#)

[Passover for Toddlers](#)

[Craft Ideas](#)

PESACH FOOD BASICS

All products must be labeled as “kosher for Passover”. Items marked just as “kosher” are not “kosher for Passover” and should not be included with Passover items.

- Matzah
- Gefilte Fish regular
- Rokeach Sweet Recipe Gefilte Fish
- Red Horse Radish
- White Horse Radish
- Cake meal for baking
- Israel Matza (Yehudah or Streits are two companies that make them)
- Matzah meal
- Macaroons
- Marshmallows dipped in Coconut
- Cake mix
- Kedem grape juice
- Kosher for Passover wine
- Israeli milk Chocolate
- Potato Starch
- Cake meal
- Chocolate chips
- Powdered chicken soup mix
- Matzo farfel

Availability of goods: Kosher for Passover goods are available at the First Avenue HyVee (with thanks to Phyllis Petchers), with some goods available at Trader Joe's & New Pioneer Co-op as well.



AGUDAS AGHIM & IOWA CITY JEWS
INVITE YOU TO OUR

PEACE & JUSTICE SEDER

April 6, 6:30 - 9 pm, Senior Center

At a time of vulnerability, the liberatory message of Passover inspires us. Join us as we grapple with the challenges of justice, democracy, and peace at home and abroad. Help us to celebrate community and our common strivings for a better world.

This event is for you if you are Jewish, Jew-ish,
Jew-Curious, or Just Plain Human.

Doors open 6:15 pm, Seder: 6:30 pm

Festive potluck meal: 7:30 pm (time approx)

Please bring a vegetarian dish (no flour or pasta products) to share. Dishes should be suitable for serving at room temperature.

Seating is limited. Please RSVP by April 3 -
rsvp@agudasachimic.org

Free will donations welcome
for local community groups



The Senior Center, 28 S Linn Street, Iowa City (enter on Iowa Ave).
Instagram: @iowacityjews Facebook: Agudas Achim Congregation

Seder Swap & Recipe Rollout

Tuesday, April 8
6 p.m. at Agudas Achim

Do you want a refresher on how the Seder works or do you want to share your family's or friends' longstanding Seder traditions?

Looking to be inspired with new recipes or share your own?

Want to show off your favorite Haggadah?

Come to this Seder Swap/Recipe Rollout at the synagogue with Rabbi Esther.

We will do a little learning on the Seder and how it works and share our best, most fun and enduring Passover practices.

All levels of learning and experience welcome.

The Second Seder

AT AGUDAS ACHIM

Sunday, April 13, 6:30 p.m.

SEDER LED BY RABBI HUGENHOLTZ

ADULT MEMBER: \$50
ADULT NON-MEMBER: \$60
CHILD UNDER 13: \$15

PLEASE LET THE OFFICE KNOW IF YOU'D BE WILLING TO DONATE TOWARDS MEALS FOR OTHERS. IF PAYMENT IS AN ISSUE, PLEASE CONTACT THE OFFICE.

PAYMENT MAY BE MADE BY CASH, CHECK, CREDIT CARD, VENMO OR PAYPAL.

RSVPS DUE BY MARCH 27TH

Catered by:
Charles Packard

MENU

Matzo ball soup (Vegetarian, GF available)

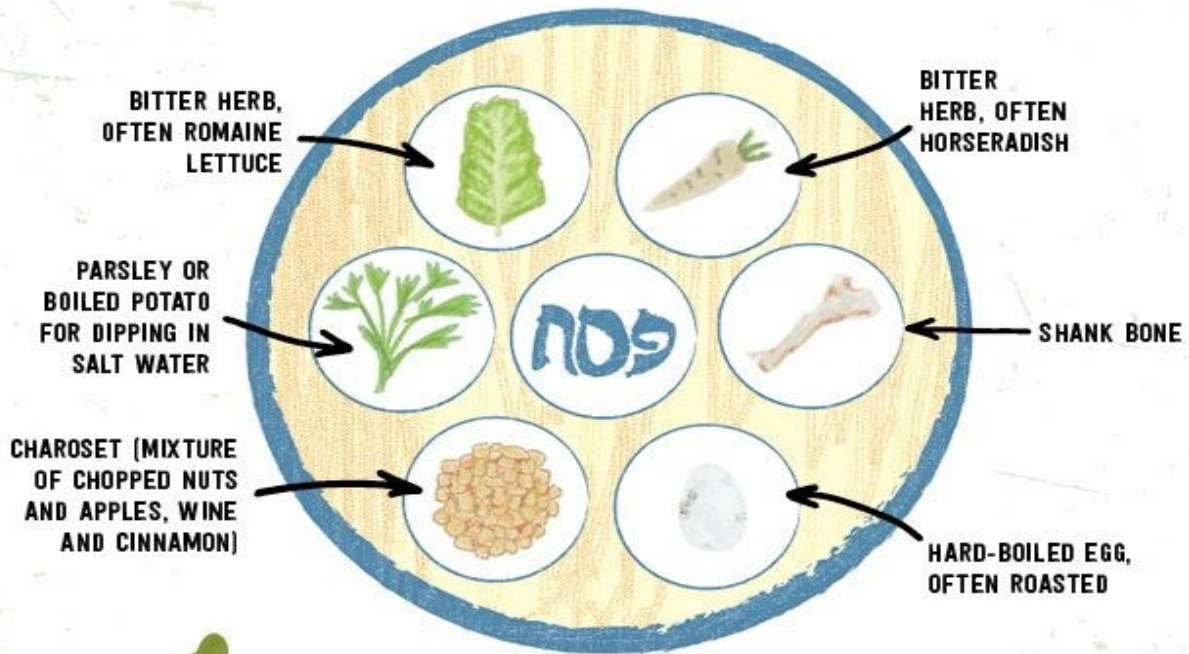
Smoked brisket (GF)
Quinoa with vegetables (GF, Vegan)

Assorted vegetable sides (GF, Vegetarian/Vegan)

Flourless chocolate cake & fruit (GF, Vegetarian)

Please RSVP here by March 27th: <https://forms.gle/VyQLqVaHVsnpNy4i7>

WHAT'S ON YOUR SEDER PLATE?



FOR VEGETARIANS, ROASTED BEET REPLACES SHANK BONE



FOR VEGANS, FLOWER OR SEED REPLACES THE EGG

NEW TRADITIONS

Some celebrants have introduced additions to their Seder plates.



ORANGE
in support of LGBT inclusion



OLIVE
in support of peace between Israelis and Palestinians



ARTICHOKE
in support of interfaith families



TOMATO
in support of farmworkers' rights



The Passover Story

The first Passover happened long ago in the far-away country of Egypt. A mean and powerful king, called Pharaoh, ruled Egypt. Worried that the Jewish people would one day fight against him, Pharaoh decided that these people must become his slaves. As slaves, the Jewish people worked very hard. Every day, from morning until night, they hammered, dug, and carried heavy bricks. They built palaces and cities and worked without rest. The Jewish people hated being slaves. They cried and asked God for help. God chose a man named Moses to lead the Jewish people.

Moses went to Pharaoh and said, "God is not happy with the way you treat the Jewish people. He wants you to let the Jewish people leave Egypt and go into the desert, where they will be free." But Pharaoh stamped his foot and shouted, "No, I will never let the Jewish people go!" Moses warned, "If you do not listen to God, many terrible things, called plagues, will come to your land." But Pharaoh would not listen, and so the plagues arrived. First, the water turned to blood. Next, frogs and, later, wild animals ran in and out of homes. Balls of hail fell from the sky and bugs, called locusts, ate all of the Egyptians' food.

Each time a new plague began, Pharaoh would cry, "Moses, I'll let the Jewish people go. Just stop this horrible plague!" Yet no sooner would God take away the

plague than Pharaoh would shout: "No, I've changed my mind. The Jews must stay!" So God sent more plagues. Finally, as the tenth plague arrived, Pharaoh ordered the Jews to leave Egypt.

Fearful that Pharaoh might again change his mind, the Jewish people packed quickly. They had no time to prepare food and no time to allow their dough to rise into puffy bread. They had only enough time to make a flat, cracker-like bread called matzah. They hastily tied the matzah to their backs and ran from their homes.

The people had not travelled far before Pharaoh commanded his army to chase after them and bring them back to Egypt. The Jews dashed forward, but stopped when they reached a large sea. The sea was too big to swim across. Frightened that Pharaoh's men would soon reach them, the people prayed to God, and a miracle occurred. The sea opened up. Two walls of water stood in front of them and a dry, sandy path stretched between the walls. The Jews ran across. Just as they reached the other side, the walls of water fell and the path disappeared. The sea now separated the Jews from the land of Egypt. They were free!

Each year at Passover, we eat special foods, sing songs, tell stories, and participate in a seder – a special meal designed to help us remember this miraculous journey from slavery to freedom.

PJ Library
March 17, 2017

Order of the Seder

- Kadesh** The First Cup
- Urchatz** Wash the Hands
- Karpas** Greens in Salt
- Yachatz** Break the Middle
- Magid** Tell the Story
- Rachtzah** Wash and Bless
- Motzi Matzah** Matzah
- Maror** Bitter Herbs
- Korech** Sweet and Spicy
- Shulchan Orech** Dinner
- Tzafun** Find the Afikomen
- Barech** Give Thanks
- Hallel** Sing with Joy
- Nirtzah** Dream of Next Year

HAPPY PASSOVER

Design by Rabbi Sam Kaje

BEDIKAT CHAMETZ

There is a custom to engage in a 'chametz hunt' on the night before Passover begins (in this case, Friday, April 11), once the Passover cleaning and koshering has been completed. Some wrap a number of pieces of bread (for example, 10, a mystical number) in tinfoil and hide them around the house (do not forget the number you've hidden as well as their location!) The members of the family go search for these pieces with a candle and feather, or in our contemporary context, a flashlight or the light on your cellphone! Then the retrieved chametz is burned or discarded (biur chametz) on Saturday morning with a blessing (the blessings for bedikat and biur chametz can be found in every Haggadah).

BITTUL SHISHIM

Bittul shishim, the nullification of 1/60th of an admixture is a halakhic principle that allows one to purchase non-kosher for Passover products before the start of the holiday but not during the weeklong holiday. The principle at work here is that one may intentionally nullify traces of chametz in food items that are in and of themselves not chametz (think fruit juice, tinned vegetables and fish, cheese, yogurt, milk, eggs etc.) as long as they are purchased beforehand. This allows the consumer some leniency in observing the holiday. During the holiday itself, one is limited to buying fresh produce (vegetables, fruit, fish, meat) without a hechsher, while other products will need a hechsher. If you have questions about how to observe the holiday in a way that feels meaningful and authentic to you, do not hesitate to contact the Rabbi.

A NOTE ON RITUAL OBSERVANCE

Our congregation, by virtue of its dual affiliation with both the Reform and Conservative Movements is unique. Hence, the Rabbi is able to offer rabbinic guidance from both perspectives: whether one chooses to observe (elements of) Passover on the basis of informed choice or whether one wishes to be guided by the traditional Halakhah (Jewish Law). While the integrity of ritual observance of Passover is valuable and important, it is equally important to imbue the holiday with a spirit of meaning, joy and sanctity. Being a Jew in the 21st century means that we have to consider the authenticity and validity of our own choices while holding the calling of our tradition in our hearts. Ultimately, it is up to each of us to navigate this as is suitable for our individual lives and relationships (including those with non-Jewish colleagues, friends and family). May we be blessed to make joyous, life-affirming decisions on how to integrate the rich wisdom and traditions of the holiday into our own lives.

The spaces in the synagogue will be prepared according to Conservative Halakhah, including the kitchen and the food at the Seder (featuring kosher meat and vegetarian options). Please be mindful to not bring chametz during Passover into the food preparation and consumption areas of the synagogue.

EATING KITNIYOT (LEGUMES) ON PESACH

Responsum of the Rabbinical Assembly (Conservative Movement)

Question:

In light of the ingathering of the exiles, would it be possible to eliminate the Ashkenazic custom of not eating legumes on Pesach?

Responsum:

1) In our opinion it is permitted (and perhaps even obligatory) to eliminate this custom. It is in direct contradiction to an explicit decision in the Babylonian Talmud (Pesachim 114b) and is also in contradiction to the opinion of all the sages of the Mishnah and Talmud except one (R. Yochanan ben Nuri, Pesachim 35a and parallels). It also contradicts the theory and the practice of the Amoraim both in Babylonia and in Israel (Pesachim 114b and other sources), the Geonim (Sheiltot, Halakhot Pesukot, Halakhot Gedolot, etc.) and of most of the early medieval authorities in all countries (altogether more than 50 Rishonim!).

2) This custom is mentioned for the first time in France and Provence in the beginning of the thirteenth century by R. Asher of Lunel, R. Samuel of Falaise, and R. Peretz of Corbeil - from there it spread to various countries and the list of prohibited foods continued to expand. Nevertheless, the reason for the custom was unknown and as a result many sages invented at least eleven different explanations for the custom. As a result, R. Samuel of Falaise, one of the first to mention it, referred to it as a "mistaken custom" and R. Yerucham called it a "foolish custom".

3) Therefore, the main halakhic question in this case is whether it is permissible to do away with a mistaken or foolish custom. Many rabbinic authorities have ruled that it is permitted (and perhaps even obligatory) to do away with this type of "foolish custom" (R. Abin in Yerushalmi Pesachim, Maimonides, the Rosh, the Ribash, and many others). Furthermore, there are many good reasons to do away with this "foolish custom": a) It detracts from the joy of the holiday by limiting the number of permitted foods; b) It causes exorbitant price rises, which result in "major financial loss" and, as is well known, "the Torah takes pity on the people of Israel's money"; c) It emphasizes the insignificant (legumes) and ignores the significant (hametz, which is forbidden from the five kinds of grain); d) It causes people to scoff at the commandments in general and at the prohibition of hametz in particular - if this custom has no purpose and is observed, then there is no reason to observe other commandments; e) Finally, it causes unnecessary divisions between Israel's different ethnic groups. On the other hand, there is only one reason to observe this custom: the desire to preserve an old custom. Obviously, this desire does not override all that was mentioned above. Therefore, both Ashkenazim and Sephardim are permitted to eat legumes and rice on Pesah without fear of transgressing any prohibition.

4) Undoubtedly, there will be Ashkenazim who will want to stick to the "custom of their ancestors" even though they know that it is permitted to eat legumes on Pesah. To them we recommend that they observe only the original custom of not eating rice and legumes but that they use oil from legumes and all the other foods "forbidden" over the years, such as peas, beans, garlic, mustard, sunflower seeds, peanuts etc. Thus they will be able to eat hundreds of products, which bear the label "Kosher for Pesah for those who eat legumes." This will make their lives easier and will add joy and pleasure to their observance of Pesah.

Rabbi David Golinkin, Approved Unanimously 5749

SALE OF CHAMETZ, KITNIYOT AND PESACH PREPARATION

The formula for what defines chametz is the five Biblical species of grain (wheat, spelt, rye, barley, oats) that have been brought in contact with water (and airborne yeast) for a minimum of 18 minutes. The Torah, supported by rabbinic interpretations in Rabbinic law, commands us to not consume, use or possess chametz during the seven days (eight days, rabbinically) of the holiday.

A second category of food items traditionally prohibited for Ashkenazi Jews (Jews of European descent) are *kitniyot* (known collectively as ‘legumes’ – rice, corn, legumes, peas and nuts). These have always been permitted to Sephardi and Mizrahi Jews (of Middle Eastern and Asian descent). The Committee of Jewish Laws and Standards of the Conservative Movement has ruled that kitniyot are permissible to Ashkenazi Jews also, expanding the range of foods available for Passover.

Changing one’s home over to keep ‘kosher l’Pesach’ (kosher for Passover) is one of the traditional observances of Passover. Note: preparing the house for Passover does not need to be equal to spring cleaning and is not meant to be a stressful process (rather, it invites us to cleanse symbolically and contemplate our liberation). Rabbinically, anything that is no (longer) fit for human consumption is not considered chametz, including grime, stale breadcrumbs, etc.

It is traditional to use special crockery, cooking utensils and dishes for Passover, or to kasher (‘make kosher’) utensils for the occasion. Hard, non-porous, heat resistant plastic, glass, Pyrex and metal can be kashered; earthenware, ceramics and wood (except if one sands it down) cannot. Fine bone china can be used if it has been left standing unused for a year. Kashering is usually done parallel to how the item was used: immersion in boiling water for silverware and cooking pots, heating until red hot on the stove for skillets and simple washing in case of glass. Heat-resistant kitchen surfaces and counter tops that can withstand purging with boiling water can be kashered that way. Covering food preparation surfaces with tinfoil is another option. Stoves and ovens are kashered by cleaning them and heating them (all burners on for about 10 minutes, or a self-cleaning oven cycle).

The Rabbis of the Talmud, aware that destroying chametz wholesale could cause economic hardship, created a method for storing away our chametz for the holiday and selling it to a non-Jew so that it is legally no longer in our possession. This practice is known as ‘mechirat chametz’. A form is provided in this pack which you can fill out and then the Rabbi will sell your chametz to a non-Jew for the duration of the holiday. You can lock away or store your chametz while sealed during Pesach and reclaim it after three stars appear in the sky (nightfall) on Sunday, April 20.

Please see the Rabbinical Assembly Passover guide included as a resource or contact the Rabbi if you wish more guidance on Pesach preparation and laws.

SALE OF CHAMETZ

Authorization Form

I, _____ fully empower and permit Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz to act in my place and stead, and on my behalf to sell all Chametz possessed by me, knowingly or unknowingly as defined by the Torah and Rabbinic Law (e.g. Chametz, possible Chametz, and all kinds of Chametz mixtures). Also Chametz that tends to harden and adhere to inside surfaces of pans, pots, or cooking utensils, the utensils themselves, and all kinds of live animals and pets that have been eating Chametz and mixtures thereof.

Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz a) is also empowered to lease all places wherein the Chametz owned by me may be found, particularly at the address/es listed below, and elsewhere, b) has full right to appoint any agent or substitute in her stead and said substitute shall have full right to sell and lease as provided herein, and c) has the full power and right to act as she deems fit and proper in accordance with all the details of the Bill of Sale used in the transaction to sell all my Chametz, Chametz mixtures, etc., as provided herein.

This power is in conformity with all Torah, Rabbinic and Civil laws.

Signed: _____ Date: _____

Name: _____

Address/es: _____

City/ State/ Zip: _____

I enclose \$ _____ for the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund.

Please mail to:

Agudas Achim Congregation

c/o Rabbi Esther Hugenholtz

401 E. Oakdale Blvd

Coralville, IA 52241

or drop it off at the Synagogue Office

NO LATER THAN THURSDAY, APRIL 10.

Thank You