

Passover Intro at Ohr HaTorah

Passover is one of the most intricate holidays on the Jewish calendar. It takes a lot of preparation and hard work to make Passover a success. Ohr HaTorah will provide pre-Passover classes on the laws of Passover, including instruction how to clean the house and also how to conduct the Seder.

Passover this year begins on Wednesday, April 8, in the evening with the first Seder. There are many important Passover Mitzvot that begin earlier in the day and that help us transition into the Pesach holiday.

We may eat chometz until 11:16 AM on Wednesday, April 8. We

burn the chometz by 12:20 PM. By then all of our chometz should have been sold by the rabbi or discarded in the proper way.

The day before Passover is the fast of the firstborn. On Wednesday, April 8 in the morning, a Siyum (conclusion of a tractate of Talmud) will be conducted

by Rabbi Yossi Groner at Ohr HaTorah. The purpose of the Siyum is to help the firstborn avoid the fasting on this day. The logic behind this is that only a feast of mitzvah can override the fast. When a Talmudic tractate is concluded, it triggers the need for a feast of Mitzvah. The Siyum will

follow the morning service and special blessing of the sun ceremony which begins at 7:30 AM. ✪



Shmurah Matzah Available at Ohr HaTorah

A beautiful tradition in many Jewish communities is the use of round Shmurah matzah for the Passover Seder. Some of the reasons for this custom include the fact that the Shmurah matzah is the closest replication of the original matzah the children of Israel ate when they left Egypt in haste. This is especially true of the hand-baked Shmurah matzah, for which no machinery is used and the matzah is prepared and baked by hand in the old-fashioned way.

In addition, the Shmurah matzah is baked with extra care which begins from the time of selecting and milling the grains for



wheat. Thus the name Shmurah which means guarded. The matzah is made of only two ingredients, natural unbleached wheat and pure well water. The entire process of baking the matzah, including the mixing and kneading, needs to be completed in less than 18 minutes.

The matzah is baked in an old style brick oven which is fired by

wood logs and reaches a very high temperature. The average time it takes to bake the matzah is less than three minutes. The matzah bakery shuts down production every 18 minutes and goes into a total scrub down. After a careful inspection of all the hand equipment, the bakery starts up again. The oven remains fired up all day, as the intense heat helps sanitize the oven interior.

A limited amount of Shmurah matzah will be available for sale at Congregation Ohr HaTorah by special order at \$18 per pound. If you are interested, please call our office at 704-366-3984. ✪

Friendship Circle: A Special Circle for Special Children

The Friendship Circle of Charlotte recently launched a series of programs called Sunday Circle for children with special needs and their families. Sunday Circle is an exciting and innovative way to involve the children and their volunteers in a range of activities such as holiday crafts, sports, life skills, and more. Our first Sunday Circle included a petting zoo, moon bounce, face painting, Purim crafts, and a musical circle. Friendship Circle is looking forward to this new initiative, as it is a major step forward in its mission to help children with special needs.

We wish to offer a special thank you to all the teen volunteers who give of their time to volunteer for The Friendship Circle. Every week teen volunteers visit the homes of children with special needs as part of our Friends @ Home program. The teens spend quality time with the children playing games and sports and sometimes making holiday crafts.

This spring the Friendship Circle will be launching a B'nai Mitzvah training program that will educate young adults on the challenges of people with special needs. The training program will meet for six consecutive Sundays which will include: Weekly disability awareness, Jewish themes, hands-on training for working with special needs, and loads of exciting multimedia activities. Young adults that complete the course will receive certification



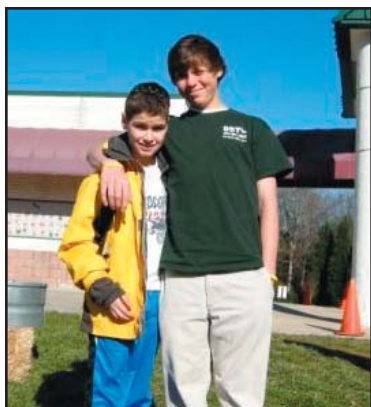
Friendship Circle kids and their buddies.

for working with special children.

For more information contact us at 704-366-3984 or info@friendshipcircelenc.org. ✪



Having fun at a Friendship Circle event.



Anyone can make new friends when they volunteer at the Friendship Circle.





Larry Horowitz, CLU, ChFC

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