



Edition 011  
July 2023  
Av 5783

# TIMES



*Wishing you a*  
**SHANA TOVA**

FROM



PROUD SUPPORTERS OF  
**ARK CENTRE**

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JOURNEY  
STARTS  
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# Welcome to ARK Centre

*By adopting a welcoming and inclusive perspective towards Judaism, ARK Centre has transformed the traditional concept of a synagogue in today's society.*

*Grounded in Modern Orthodoxy, we prioritise the needs of our community by offering a versatile space that serves as a hub for diverse enrichment and engagement activities.*

*Our unwavering commitment to fostering community harmony is evident in our efforts to build lasting relationships with various communities, embracing multiculturalism, and promoting diversity and inclusion as essential components of a thriving society.*

The 2023 edition of the ARK Times provides insights into our activities over the past year, and highlights how we, as a community, are navigating the challenges relating to religion, discrimination, and intolerance in the 21st century.

We appreciate your ongoing support of

ARK Centre and look forward to seeing you soon.

ARK Centre acknowledges the Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples of this nation. We acknowledge the traditional custodians of the lands on which our organisation is located and where we conduct our

activities. We pay our respects to ancestors and Elders, past, present and emerging. ARK Centre is committed to honouring Australian Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples' unique cultural and spiritual relationships to the land, waters and seas and their rich contribution to society.



## **ARK Centre**

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**ARK provides a safe place to shed the worries and concerns of the week and under the unwavering guidance of Rabbi Gabi, we hit the Spiritual “Refresh” button ready to start again, renewed and inspired.**

– Viv Parry

Thanks to Ann Burmeister, Ann Greiman & Gretchen Grodski, for their contribution and assistance in the development of this publication. Appreciation to Sharon Westin Graphic Design ([sharonwestinshaw.com.au](http://sharonwestinshaw.com.au)) for her support in designing this magazine.



# From the Rabbi's Desk

RABBI GABI KALTMANN



Rosh Hashanah, the holiday that marks the beginning of the Jewish calendar, is a time of introspection, repentance, and renewal. The spirit of the holiday is growth, which is beautifully captured in the Talmudic quote above.

Just as every blade of grass has the potential to flourish, as humans, we too can transform ourselves and become better individuals. The beautiful imagery of an angel that whispers to each blade of grass serves as a reminder of the presence of the Divine in our lives, urging us to strive for greater heights and to recognise the infinite potential within ourselves.

Growth is not always easy. When you grow, you leave an older and more familiar world behind, and instead embrace a new future with all its new beginnings. At any age, starting something afresh, and learning to grow through the experience takes discipline and builds character.

There are many ways to cultivate growth in our lives, whether it be through acts of kindness and compassion towards others, seeking out new experiences or opportunities for learning, and dedicating thousands of hours to learning a new skill. Whatever path we choose, if it is done with a sense of purpose and intentionality, it provides opportunities for renewal.

“Every blade of grass has an angel that bends over it and whispers, ‘Grow, grow.’”

**TALMUD BAVLI, TRACTATE BERACHOT 10A**

One of the key themes of Rosh Hashanah is teshuvah, or repentance. This is a time when we reflect on our actions over the past year and seek forgiveness for any wrongs we may have committed.

Through teshuvah, we acknowledge our mistakes and commit to doing better in the future. This process of repentance is not only a way to seek forgiveness from others, but also a means of spiritual growth and transformation. When we face our mistakes head on, we grow from the experience and become better equipped to work on ourselves to improve.

Our sages describe what true teshuvah is, namely, when faced with the exact same set of circumstances, you choose to do something differently and don't repeat the same mistakes of old.

While this sounds simple, in truth, it is not always easy. It can be uncomfortable, challenging, and even painful at times.

To truly change our actions and behaviours we may have to take responsibility for those times when we have caused harm, or acted in ways that were not aligned with our values. To change our behaviours, we may be forced to look inwards at our actions and see traits that we acknowledge were lacking.

It can take time to feel ready to acknowledge these shortcomings.

And yet, a new year is the perfect time to do so. It rolls around, whether one is

ready or not, and asks us to reassess our year and pledge to do better. To cultivate the qualities of compassion, kindness, and humility. To embody the values and principles of our faith in all that we do. To strive to build stronger relationships with our loved ones and with the broader community. To work towards creating a world that is more just, peaceful, and compassionate for all. To acknowledge, despite our best efforts, that we still have work to do on ourselves to become better people.

And yet, despite these challenges, the opportunity to start fresh and leave behind the mistakes of the past is a universal theme. When we start something anew, we are reminded of the cyclical nature of life, where each year brings with it the potential for fresh starts.

So, as we approach this Jewish new year with a sense of hope, gratitude, and determination, let us commit to making the most of every moment that we are given.

May this coming year be a year of blessings, growth, and endless possibilities. May each of us be blessed with insight to see that just as G-d's angels encourage each blade of grass to grow, there are surely angels above each of us encouraging each of us to fulfil our potential and unique mission on this earth.

# From the GM's Desk

JO STAR



As I reflect on the past year at ARK Centre, I am taken aback at how things have changed so dramatically in the past year since I started my role as General Manager.

While the weekly challenges of the pandemic were put behind us, we focussed on the light at the end of the tunnel and have gradually been regaining the 'buzz' of the pre-pandemic days. This has been achieved by facilitating many events which have been enjoyed by those from both within and outside our community.

Our membership has remained strong throughout the year, and we have welcomed new families into our centre.

Friday night kiddushim and Shabbat services have been a highlight throughout the year, and they are a beautiful way to end the week. I encourage all our members to join us and be part of this uplifting experience on a regular basis.

As General Manager, I see myself as someone who is here to provide you with events, programs and services which are of interest and meaning to you.

Getting to know many of you over the course of the year, and receiving your feedback as to what you would like to see featured at ARK has been extremely valuable.

Suggestions of promoting diversity and inclusivity in our programming,

as well as establishing new relationships with organisations that serve diverse communities has provided us the opportunity to facilitate numerous events throughout the year. Events such as the combined Shabbat/Iftar dinner, Save a Child Heart's Foundation dinner, the visit from the Ukrainian Ambassador are just a few examples. These events and others are featured elsewhere in the magazine.

Please continue to share your opinions and suggestions and I will do my best to accommodate them.

As I look towards the coming year, I am excited about the possibilities and opportunities that lie ahead.

I will continue to focus on providing exceptional programming and services to our members, while also reaching out to new communities and individuals who may benefit from the above.

I am confident that our community centre will continue to thrive and grow, and I look forward to welcoming many more families and individuals to share in all that we have to offer.

Thank you to all our board members, centre members, volunteers, and staff for your continued support and dedication to our shared mission.

Together, we can accomplish great things, and build a stronger and even more vibrant community for all.



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# Kabbalat Shabbat and Iftar at ARK Centre

In today's world, where ignorance leads to misunderstandings and division, it is more important than ever to find ways to bring people of different faiths together.

What started out as a conversation between our very own Rabbi Gabi and Ahmet Keskin from the Australian Intercultural Society (AIS), transformed into a unique interfaith gathering on a Friday night in March with a combined Friday night Kabbalat Shabbat and Iftar Dinner. Two faiths observing each other's traditions and engaging in meaningful conversation about how to grow spiritually in this secular society.

Dignitaries, faith leaders, members of our community, people of various backgrounds were welcomed – those interested in exploring interfaith dialogue which we believe is an essential component of building stronger and more inclusive communities.

Stephen Brook, Deputy Editor of The Sunday Age did an excellent job moderating the conversation with the three panellists; Vivienne Nguyen AM, Chair of the Victorian Multicultural Commission; Dr Susan Carland, Academic writer and social commentator; & Mia Gardiner; Journalist for AJN.

Each panellist shared their spiritual journey touching on transformative moments in their lives and pondered the question of spiritual development. They talked about inner growth through faith led practices, community interactions, and their thoughts on optimism for faith-based communities here in Victoria.

**“On Friday night, I broke my fast at a synagogue in a magnificent demonstration of friendship and bridge-building. It was their Shabbat and our Iftar, and one hundred people of a**

## **Kabbalat Shabbat (Receiving Shabbat)**

The time when we welcome Shabbat. The service usually begins with an opening song, followed by lighting candles which symbolises the ending of the work week and the beginning of Shabbat. We read or sing selections from six prayers, representing the six days of creation.

## **Iftar**

One of the religious observances of the holy month of Ramadan observed by Muslims, when they gather to break their fast together. The meal is taken just after the call to the Maghrib prayer, which is around sunset.



constellation of beliefs and no beliefs came together to talk and listen, to honour what unites us, and what makes us different.”

– Dr Susan Carland

“The Shabbat-Iftar dinner was such an inspiring and unique evening, having grown up in a Muslim country and now being so heavily entrenched in the Melbourne Jewish community, seeing both parts of my life come together like this made me feel so proud of both our respective communities. It was hopefully the first of many nights like this and it was an honour to be a part of it.”

– Mia Gardiner

The panel discussion was followed by a vegetarian middle eastern dinner at sunset to mark Shabbat and Iftar breaking of the fast meal.

During dinner, everyone mingled and conversed with the aim at fostering understanding and respect across different faiths.

Rabbi Gabi believes, “As Jews and Muslims, we may have some different

rituals, and different ways of framing our beliefs, but ultimately we have a lot in common. We all believe in the importance of community, of reaching out to others, and of opening our doors to those in need. And so, hosting a Shabbat and Iftar dinner at ARK Centre is a way for us to come together, to share our traditions, and to remind ourselves of the common humanity that binds us together”.

Ahmet Keskin from the AIS says, “This event is important to recognise our shared past and our collective presence in modern times where we look to learn from each other’s tradition to renew our sense of purpose and connection with each other”.

This gathering provided an opportunity to enhance relationships and address common issues like hate, manifesting in the form of anti-Semitism and Islamophobia, and to ally in the fight against bigotry and hate towards other groups. It was an opportunity to celebrate diversity and inclusion which are the cornerstones of a thriving democracy.

We learnt that by embracing and respecting the differences between us, we can create a society that is more respectful, dynamic, and innovative.

What an incredible evening it was at ARK Centre as we celebrated each other’s faiths.



# Pillars of Light

The Pillars of Light Festival based in Federation Square provides a multicultural and multi-faith celebration of Chanukah which lasts eight days, and focuses on addressing our common humanity and the differences that bring all of Victoria's multicultural communities together.

The festival took place between December 18 and 23.

We welcomed different keynote speakers each night who addressed various key issues facing Victoria's multicultural communities, with their express intent to promote equality as well as spread hope, positivity, love and light to all attendees.

The festival is specifically designed to encourage and increase inter-faith dialogue, promote bridge-building, break stigmas and unite the many different factions of Australia's culturally and linguistically diverse groups (CALD) together in one setting. The aim of the festival is to bring hope, tolerance and encouragement to all fellow Victorians.

Prior to Chanukah over 120 year 5/6 students workshopped with Pillars of

Light on how best to call out racism and intolerance when they saw it in the school yard. Throughout the week faith-based leaders, multicultural community representatives, diplomats, politicians and indigenous leaders joined our event.

The festival has become a standout event strengthening Melbourne's national reputation by showing the world and the rest of Australia that a large multicultural event of this kind and magnitude can indeed be achieved.

ARK Centre's Pillars of Light Festival has also been recognised for its efforts in the media, including in the Australian Jewish News, the national Greek newspaper – Neos Kosmos, and on SBS TV station.

We at the ARK Centre firmly believe that this festival is just one piece of a puzzle that helps to integrate Melbourne and Victoria's many different communities, allowing them to come together in a show of solidarity and community harmony.

We believe that we can have a long-term impact on Melbourne's cultural scene

by changing the multicultural tapestry and creating an approach based on humanism and inclusivity. We believe that this will ensure that together we can continue to make Melbourne and the whole of Victoria a safe place for multicultural and multi-faith members to celebrate their religious holidays together in harmony.

Events like this show the rest of the world the great privilege and gift we have.

Festivals like the Pillars of Light are not an inevitability or even possible in many places around the world, and therefore it confirms that with open dialogue as well as mutual understanding and respect, different faiths and cultures can work and celebrate their different festivals together in peace and harmony.



## Pillars of Light Program 2022

DATE	THEME
Sunday 18 December	Connection
Monday 19 December	Inclusivity
Tuesday 20 December	Youth
Wednesday 21 December	Diversity
Thursday 22 December	Reconciliation
Friday 23 December	Harmony



# Where Do You Make Jewish Connections?

The debate over assimilation in Jewish communities continues into the present day, with different opinions about how much assimilation is acceptable or desirable. Regardless of which side of the debate your opinion lies, maintaining Jewish traditions and customs is crucial to preserving Jewish culture and identity.

Increasingly, Jewish students are attending non-Jewish day schools. Whilst the reasons families are making this choice are many and varied, The Jewish Education Foundation in its 2022 Discussion Paper “Re-thinking the Future of Our Jewish Schools”, cited ABS data, highlighting that in 2006, 30% of Jewish primary-aged children attended government schools, and in 2016 it had risen to 38%. This does not include Jewish children attending non-government non-Jewish day schools (other private schools).

So where can Jewish children make connections and be part of the community, outside of school? Firstly, Shule is a great place to start. ARK Centre’s mission encapsulates inclusivity. What better way to foster community connection than through our community centre, words and shule? We encourage families of all shapes and sizes to come to ARK Centre and explore our Modern Orthodox ethos and services.

For primary-aged children in some non-Jewish day schools, there are Jewish education programs on offer. As an example, UJEB aims to provide the highest quality formal and informal Jewish education to students outside the Jewish day-school system. Its purpose is to provide the building blocks for a connected Jewish life for students of government and independent non-Jewish schools.

Maccabi Victoria is another excellent organisation for people of all ages (5 to 105!) to get involved in over 20 Clubs of varying levels of competition – from high-energy sports to lawn bowls. Maccabi runs various programs and events and is an excellent way to spend time with like-minded Jewish athletes.

Wherever you choose to make the connection to the Melbourne Jewish Community, and regardless of your age,



it’s an important connection to make. We encourage members of the community to come to ARK Centre and get acquainted (or re-acquainted) with their Jewish heritage and identity, and we welcome people all year round. For us at ARK, no one should ever feel reluctant to attend, regardless of which school they went to, or how many years it’s been since they were in Shule. Rabbi Gabi is available for a chat. The message is clear – it is never too late to connect or re-connect with your Jewish heritage and roots.

**UJEB – United Jewish Education Board**  
**PH: 9523 6844      W: [www.ujeb.org](http://www.ujeb.org)**

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# Infertility in the Jewish Community

## How can we support each other through this journey?

Infertility affects both women and men in Jewish communities worldwide, and Australia is no exception. According to a study by the Royal Women's Hospital in Melbourne, around one in six couples in Victoria struggles with infertility.

In some cases, religious traditions may also play a role in fertility issues. This does not necessarily relate directly to infertility, but can influence falling pregnant as Orthodox Jewish women are required to observe family purity laws, which can limit their opportunities for conceiving.

Some Jewish communities may stigmatise infertility as a personal failure or divine punishment, causing individuals to feel ashamed or isolated.

To address these challenges, many Jewish couples in Australia seek treatment through assisted reproductive technologies (ART) such as IVF or surrogacy. These options are typically permissible within Jewish law, although some Orthodox rabbis may have specific guidelines or restrictions for those seeking ART. (If you require rabbinic advice, please consult your local rabbi).

The Australian Jewish community is fortunate to have the support of the Australian Jewish Fertility Network whose vision is that no Jewish Australian should ever feel alone on their fertility

journey – they are there to offer financial, emotional, and spiritual support, as well as educational resources, and to encourage open and honest conversations about infertility within the Jewish community.

From dealing with the emotional roller coaster of cycles of ART, to the pressure of IVF treatment cycles, friends falling pregnant, or the pain of shattered dreams, many who go through infertility feel isolated and unsupported. This can compound their sense of shame, loss, and pain. Additionally, couples can experience immense financial strain due to the expensive and ongoing treatments (the average IVF cycle can cost over \$10,000).

Kerry Gonski, Chair & Director of AJFN responds to the question:

What are the reasons behind your passion for heading the AJFN Board, and what is your ultimate dream of achievement for the organisation?

*"I am driven by my personal experience of fertility struggles and a deep connection to the mission of the AJFN. My ultimate dream is to eliminate the sense of loneliness and isolation that often accompanies the fertility journey. I hope to create a community where every Jewish Australian is supported through their journey, with access to financial, emotional, educational,*

*spiritual, and advocacy resources, and where open conversations about fertility are welcomed and encouraged. Together, we can provide a safe space for families and PG pave the way for many more little miracles to come."*

**"At times those struggling with infertility, be it primary, secondary, or circumstantial, can become emotionally overwhelmed and may need some distance. It may come across as a personal offense, but it is important to remember that it is not personal."**

To follow is the IVF journey of Yael, who after trying for three years was blessed with twins.

*"I went through three years of IVF, not knowing why I couldn't fall pregnant considering I had a child two years earlier that was conceived naturally."*

*An emotional rollercoaster from start to end.*

*Six fresh cycles involving self-injections every day for weeks, 12 embryo transfers and two miscarriages.*

*I did everything that was suggested to me that would possibly get me pregnant, including sitting in a hyperbaric chamber, weekly acupuncture sessions, blood tests*

*every day for months at a time, yoga, organic diet – you name it, I did it!*

*While family and friends around me were having babies, I was putting on a brave face, not sharing the pain I was going through month after month.*

*Unless you go through it, you can't fully appreciate the mental anguish one feels on so many levels – from failure to punishment, there is a constant weight on your shoulders. Thankfully the IVF clinic had a great psychologist!*

*I was mentally worn down and had succumbed to the fact that I was not going to have any more children. I was grateful for my son, and I did not want him to feel that he was not enough, but on the other hand, I was so disappointed that I would not be able to give him a sibling and my husband another child.*

*As this was going to be possibly my last attempt, I pleaded with my doctor to allow me to transfer two frozen embryos (only one at a time was recommended) and he agreed as he thought my chances were low.*

*Transfer day came and the embryologist*

*informed me that one of the embryos, only 50% of the cells had thawed out (they were frozen), and the other was a day slow in growing, BUT... they still had life in them!*

*Leaving the clinic, I wasn't at all confident and had given up in my mind.*

*The following two weeks waiting for the results were torment. Every twinge, twitch, and ache were over analysed. Then came the period spotting.*

*I called the clinic in tears, insisting on coming in for my blood test as I wanted to get off the drugs which were making me crazy.*

*Wait two more days they said, but I couldn't – I had had enough! Waiting by the phone to get my pregnancy result was nauseating, and then it rang.*

*There were many voices on the other end of the phone – the nurse, the psychologist, the head nurse, the doctor; all there to give me the result.*

*Yael, you're pregnant! Your hormone levels are sky high. Looks like you are having twins!*

*I burst into tears. Some of the weight was lifted off my shoulders, there was a long way to go but I was off the starting blocks. Nine months later, we were blessed with twins.*

*When I held the babies in my arms, I was thankful in a strange way for the journey I had been on, because those were the babies I was meant to have.*

*My three children are and always will be my greatest achievement. I feel blessed but I am conscious that not everyone has an ending like mine, and for those going through this journey, my heart goes out to you."*



\*One in six couples in Australia experience infertility, which is defined as failure to conceive after a year of unprotected sex, or the inability to carry pregnancies to a live birth.

## When engaging family members or friends who are dealing with infertility:

- If your friend or family member has shared their infertility journey, assure them that no matter what the outcome, you will be there for them in any way they need. Validate whatever feelings or reactions he or she may be experiencing, regardless of what you think about how they are handling the situation. Embrace them with love and without judgement.
- Do not assume someone is or is not experiencing infertility. Even if a couple does not have a child or if there is a large gap between children, do not make assumptions. (They may have experienced miscarriages or stillbirths or a myriad of other challenges; know that this is a highly charged area for assumptions.)
- If either member of the couple reaches out to share their story, the best thing that one can do for a friend or family member is be a friend, listen when they speak, offer a shoulder to cry on, a warm embrace or any other gesture of love and support you both are comfortable with.

Be understanding; at times those struggling with infertility can become emotionally overwhelmed and may need some social and/or emotional distance. Do not take this as a personal affront, but as a coping mechanism.

Reposted from <https://yeshtikva.org/supporting-others/what-to-not-to-say>

**If you are experiencing infertility, you are not alone. Australian Jewish Fertility Network is there to help. Please reach out in complete confidence.**

**PH : 02 7906 8366 E: [support@ajfn.org.au](mailto:support@ajfn.org.au) W: <https://www.ajfn.org.au>**

# Converting to Judaism

WITH REBBETZIN MUSHKA



Converting to Judaism can be a challenging and emotional experience. It's natural to feel uncertain and overwhelmed during this journey. Unlike those who learn about Judaism in school or Hebrew school over a few years, individuals who choose to convert to Judaism often have to learn a lot of new information in a relatively short time. This can be daunting and overwhelming, but it doesn't have to be. At ARK we are here to help and support you during this time.

The ARK conversion program places a strong emphasis on fostering a sense of communal friendship among our candidates.

Judaism is not just about acquiring knowledge, but also about developing a personal connection to Hashem, the Torah, and the Jewish community.

At ARK we encourage our candidates to ask questions, to explore their spirituality, and to develop their own unique Jewish identity. We believe that every person's journey is different, and we strive to create a learning environment that is flexible and responsive to the needs of each individual.

In addition to teaching candidates about Jewish history and practices, we also help them develop practical skills for building a Jewish home. This includes instruction on how to celebrate holidays and Shabbat, how to observe kashrut, and how to create a welcoming and meaningful Jewish environment for themselves and their families.

We recognise that we all come from different backgrounds, and we can learn a great deal from each other. We encourage our candidates to discuss the new topics they are learning and share practical tips on how to celebrate Shabbat and upcoming holidays. This sense of community helps to create a supportive and encouraging environment that makes the learning process more enjoyable and less intimidating.

My goal when I teach candidates is to give them the skills and information they need to continue their learning even after conversion. Like training for a marathon, it's about time, commitment, and perseverance. But with Judaism, there is no finish line. It's about giving our candidates the tools they need to build and enhance their Jewish lives, filled with beauty, joy, meaning, and growth.

Through the ARK Conversion Program, we hope to inspire new converts to embrace Judaism, not just as a religion but as a way of life.

I believe that every participant has the potential to be a source of inspiration and wisdom for others.

With dedication, commitment, and creativity, I hope to ensure that each individual's journey into Judaism is a rewarding and fulfilling one.

Please do not hesitate to reach out if you would like further information on the ARK conversion classes.

# Your community is our community.

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# Beautiful Synagogues Around the World

Synagogue aesthetics are subjective and depend on many factors. These can include:

- **Architectural Design:** The design of the synagogue is one of the most critical factors that make it stand out.
- **Artistic Elements:** Decorative elements such as stained-glass windows, intricate woodcarvings, frescoes, and murals add a visual dimension to the structure.
- **Lighting:** Appropriate lighting helps to set the ambiance and mood of the synagogue interior.
- **Ritual Objects:** The use of ritual objects such as Torah covers, bimahs, and ark curtains adds elegance and significance to the synagogue.
- **Location and Landscape:** Synagogues situated in serene locations with lush landscapes and breathtaking views.

Below are some images of synagogues from around the world which have earned a reputation for their beauty and imaginative design.

Not only are they examples of magnificent architecture, but they are also vitally important for their historic and cultural significance which reflects the rich heritage of the Jewish people.

## Dohany Street Synagogue, Budapest, Hungary

One of the largest in Europe, it features a Moorish Revival architectural style with intricate details and stained-glass windows.



## Hurva Synagogue, Jerusalem, Israel

Rebuilt after its destruction in 1948, it features a stunning dome and stained-glass windows



### Great Synagogue of Florence, Italy

Built in the 19th century in a mix of neo-Renaissance and Byzantine styles, it boasts a stunning interior with marble columns and ornate frescoes.



### Synagogue of El Transito, Toledo, Spain

Built in the 14th century during the Golden Age of Spanish Jewry, it features intricate stucco work, wood carvings, and tilework.



### Central Synagogue, New York City, USA

The largest synagogue in Manhattan, it features a distinctive Byzantine-style dome and stained glass windows.



### Kahal Shalom Synagogue, Rhodes, Greece

One of the oldest synagogues in Greece, it features a unique blend of Ottoman and Medieval European architecture.



## Ohel Jakob Synagogue, Munich, Germany

Designed by architects Rena Wandel-Hoefer and Wolfgang Lorch, it features a modern, minimalist design with a striking blue facade.



## Cymbalista Synagogue, Tel Aviv, Israel

A cultural centre and the main synagogue of Tel Aviv University. It was designed in 1996 by architect Mario Botta, it features a semi-circular shape and a stunning interior with polished stone floors and natural light.



## Synagogue of Tomar, Portugal

A small synagogue from the 15th century, it boasts a beautiful interior with azulejos (painted ceramic tiles).



## Temple Beth-El, Birmingham, Alabama, USA

Designed by noted architect Wallace A. Rayfield, it features a Neo-Classical design with tall Corinthian columns and a domed ceiling.



### Synagogue of Siena, Italy

Shared by Graham Goldsmith

The result of a substantial work of expansion and renovation of the original synagogue spaces by the Florentine architect Giuseppe del Rosso, the synagogue was inaugurated in May 1786. It is located in vicolo delle Scotte and is still used today for religious functions by the local community.



### Mikve' Israel-Emanuel Synagogue, Curaçao, Caribbean

With the floors covered in sand, often referred to as the Snoa, another term for synagogue—this is the oldest surviving synagogue and Jewish congregation in the Americas.



### Oudtshoorn Synagogue, South Africa

Shared by Teri Lichtenstein  
(photo of Daniel and Jake)

Referred to as 'Yerushalayim beDerom Afrika' (Jerusalem of South Africa), Oudtshoorn Synagogue is one of the oldest synagogues in South Africa and dates back to the times when there was a thriving Jewish population living in Oudtshoorn due to the ostrich trade.



### Greater Synagogue of Barcelona, Spain

Shared by Gretchen Grodski

The Greater Synagogue of Barcelona is one of the oldest in Europe and the last one to be discovered. Located in the old Jewish quarter, the Call de Barcelona still retains its medieval architecture.



### Great Synagogue of Florence, Italy

Shared by Gretchen Grodski

The Great Synagogue of Florence was built in the wake of emancipation in the nineteenth century. Unique in a city of remarkable buildings, the Great Synagogue was built between 1874 and 1882.



“Arthur and I enjoy being members of the ARK community due to the relaxed, friendly atmosphere combined with the learning, leadership and insights from Rabbi Gabi. It is a pleasure seeing the generations chat, discuss, share news and play.

– Sandra Baigel



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# Ukrainian Ambassador Vasyl Myroshnychenko visits ARK Centre

In September, ARK Centre was thrilled to host the Ukrainian Ambassador to Australia Vasyl Myroshnychenko for a Shabbat service.

The Ambassador gave a Q&A discussion, hosted by JCCV Chief Operating Officer Naomi Levin, about the current situation in Ukraine.

During their discussion the Ambassador explained that \$1 trillion worth of damage has been caused by the ongoing war between Russia and Ukraine, and that it will take generations to rebuild. He said, “Five hundred hospitals have been destroyed”. The Ambassador thanked the people of Australia for their ongoing support of Ukraine.

With pride, Myroshnychenko also said, “Ukrainian people are united now because I think this is what Russians have underestimated; they didn’t expect that kind of resistance coming from Ukraine.”

He added, “The biggest danger out there has united all the people, now there is

unity and it’s unbelievable. We can see a birth of a true political nation.”

After the discussion, the Ambassador stayed for the Shabbat service as well as a Shabbat dinner.

Rabbi Gabi said “it was an absolute honour to host the Ambassador. He is a true warrior doing his president and

people proud.

We were left in awe of his passion and tireless work for his people and country. The Ambassador was extremely generous with his time, discussing the current situation, the Australian government assistance, and the history of the Jewish community in Ukraine.”



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# Been and Seen at ARK



Rabbi Gabi with the Maccabi Junior Carnival Team



Rabbi Gabi with Romy Burzstyn from Our Village Kitchen



Rabbi Gabi with Chef Francis



Daniel Aghion, Tania Bowen, Dean Parkin and Rabbi Gabi



Rabbi Gabi with the team from Save a Child's Heart Foundation



Rabbi Gabi with Zionism Victoria President Yossi Goldfarb and CEO Zeddy Lawrence



Rabbi Gabi with Lionel Krongold



Rabbi Gabi with Abraham Abraham from Football Victoria and Kevin Milstein, CEO of the Reagan Milstein Foundation



Professor Yaakov Nahmias and the team from Hebrew University



Rabbi Gabi with the team from Stand Up



Rabbi Gabi with Chairperson Yael Hersham from Unchain My Heart



Rabbi Gabi with Josh Frydenberg



Rabbi Gabi with Vedran Drakulic OAM and Dr Susan Carland



Rabbi Gabi with Jessica Wilson MP and Martin Zoland

# Rabbi Gabi Out and About with...



Legends Harold Mitchell and Ahmed Nur at the Youth Activating Youth end of year luncheon



John Pesutto and Tammy Olsher



John Cena



Rebbetzin Mushka becoming an Australian Citizen



PM Anthony Albanese



Lord Mayor Sally Capp



Josh Burns MP, Leor Harel and Premier Daniel Andrews



Judy Fetter, Victorian Attorney General Jaclyn Symes and Daniel Aghion



Sheikh Alla and David Southwick



Moshe Kahn, Rabbi Glasman and Michael Naphtali



Shaya Rubinstein



Hollywood Director Peter Farrelly



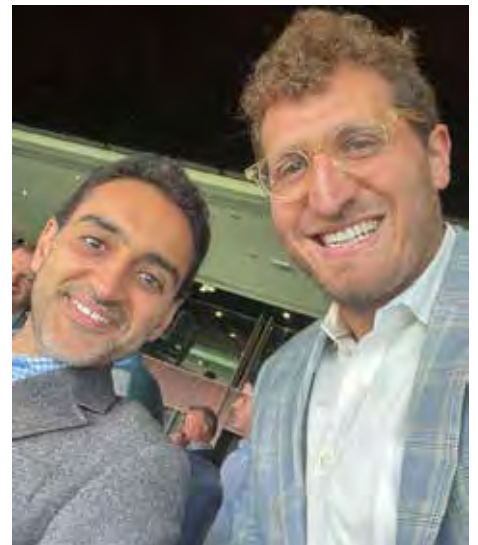
Zelda Rubinstein



Zeddy Lawrence



With Rabbi Yaakov Glasman and members of the UAE Embassy



Waleed Aly



Israeli Ambassador Amir Maimon, Michael Naphtali and Sam Tarascio



Jeff Shenker



Jeff Pinch



The team at All things Equal



Bachar Houli



Matt Kaplan, Liam Arnold-Levy, Guy Cohen



George Altman



Av and Lev at Collingwood Football Game



Fellow chaplain and Rabbi Michael Lewis – Ambulance Victoria Chaplains Conference



Dr Michelle Ananda-Rajah MP and the Deputy Editor of the Australian Jewish News Sharyn Kolieb



Aunt Joy Murphy and Evonne Goolagong Cawley



Brad Johnson



Minister Colin Brooks MP and Vivienne Nguyen VMC



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# Shabbat at ARK



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# Pastoral Care

Pastoral care is a cornerstone of ARK Centre's mission. It includes counselling, spiritual guidance, and emotional support and is mostly offered by Rabbi Gabi who holds a Masters in Social Work.

Rabbi Gabi is available to all community members during difficult times such as illness, addiction, or grief.

Pastoral care also encompasses providing comfort and assistance in other areas of life such as marriage, family relationships, and personal growth, and sometimes may involve providing practical support in a myriad of ways to those in need.

ARK Centre's approach to pastoral care is holistic, and emphasises the

importance of nurturing personal relationships, promoting healing, and fostering resilience.

Pastoral care in Judaism is closely linked to the Jewish tradition of tikkun olam, or repairing the world, and is grounded in the values of compassion, empathy, and social justice. This is fundamental to who we are at ARK Centre.

We encourage all our community members, whether you attend shule weekly, once a year, or not at all, to get in touch with us if you or someone you know needs our support. We offer support in a variety of ways, and are adaptable and open to the needs of each individual.

As your community centre, our priority is to be there for you. Should you need assistance in any way, or know of someone who does, we encourage you to get in touch with us.



For any Pastoral Care enquiries, or to participate in helping us out with pastoral care for our community, please contact the office on **8658 4044** or via **[office@arkcentre.com.au](mailto:office@arkcentre.com.au)**

Your enquiry will be received with compassion, and any information you provide will be treated in the strictest confidence.

“

**The Ark is where I seek solace, where my spirit finds nourishment, and where I connect with many friends and the community. The Ark led by Rabbi Gabi embodies Jewish culture and heritage. – James Levy**



---

**Geinia &  
David Goldberger  
& the family**

---

# Chagim ARK Centre Style

Over the year, the ARK Centre family celebrated the Jewish festivals in line with our values and traditions.

## Succot



## Chanukah



## Rosh Hashanah





## Purim



## Pesach



## Yom Ha'atzmaut



## Lag Ba'Omer



## Shavuot



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# Smachot at ARK Centre



# Club Chai 18

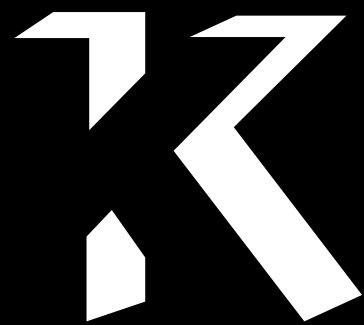


The fourth annual Club Chai 18 Whisky Night took place at Dov & Rosie Potaznik's home.

Friends gathered for a l'chaim and nosh, each contributing a bottle of whisky for ARK to share on special occasions.

We thank the Potazniks for sponsoring the night and for their hospitality.





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## **Chairman**

Jeffrey Appel OAM

## **Partners**

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Steven Klein  
Jeremy Rosenthal  
Steven Casper  
Richard Moshinsky  
Jonathan Hirsh  
Andrew Green  
Tanya Cross  
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# ARK Centre

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Terry Better



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Gretchen Grodski



Lionel Krongold



David Mandel



Michael Naphtali



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### ARK CENTRE TEAM



Rabbi Gabi Kaltmann



Rebbetzin Mushka  
Kantor Kaltmann



Jo Star –  
General Manager



Francis Flood –  
ARK Chef



Monique Kelle –  
Event Support



Charmaine Wilson –  
Office Administer

### The ARK Centre wishes to acknowledge the following organisations and individuals for their generous support:

- Erdi Foundation
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- Loti & Victor Smorgon Family Foundation
- Christopher Canavan
- Deborah & Graham Goldsmith
- Ann & Michael Greiman
- Michelle Jablko & Paul Wegener
- Elias Jreissati
- The Estate of the late Mr Leslie Klemke
- Marian & Lionel Krongold Family
- Joan Lurie & Jonny Orelowitz
- Lynda & David Mandel
- Naphtali Family
- Lisa & Jeffrey Pinch
- Viv & Harry Rosenberg
- Bettina & Andrew Schwartz
- Anonymous

### Special Thanks:

- Caulfield Hebrew Congregation for the ongoing loan of a Sefer Torah
- Michael Fetter of Tisher Liner FC Law Solicitors as honorary solicitor
- Dan Feldman of HR Legal for legal advice
- Advertisers and supporters of this publication

### Pillars of Light:

- Australian Multicultural Foundation
- B'nai B'rith Victoria
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- Ann & Michael Greiman
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- Bindy & David Koadlow
- Lynda & David Mandel
- Ninety Four Feet
- Rampersand
- Loti & Victor Smorgon Family Foundation
- Stand Up: Jewish Commitment to a Better World
- The Pratt Foundation
- Victorian Government
- Victorian Multicultural Commission

# Support ARK Centre

## Membership

As a not-for-profit organisation, we rely on renewed memberships during our Annual Membership Drive to enable us to deliver our many services and offerings.

The membership form is included in the magazine, or alternately, please email [office@arkcentre.com.au](mailto:office@arkcentre.com.au) for further information.

## Pay it Forward

Your contribution to our Pay it Forward initiative enables us to assist individuals and families who are in need of support.

This allows us to provide meals and/or assistance with membership fees to ensure families become, and remain, members of ARK Centre regardless of their financial circumstances.

To assist, please head to [www.arkcentre.com.au](http://www.arkcentre.com.au) and click the Pay it Forward Membership box at the top of the page.

## Yizkor Board

Commemorate a family member or loved one with a bespoke plaque on our Yizkor board.

Cost per plaque is \$600.



## ARK Centre Library Fund

Donations toward the development of our library and library-based activities are tax deductible.

Please consider any of these support opportunities:

### Pillars of Light Sponsorship

Contact Rabbi Gabi to discuss sponsorship details: [rabbi@arkcentre.com.au](mailto:rabbi@arkcentre.com.au)

### Publication & prayer books

Please contact the office to learn about our current projects: [office@arkcentre.com.au](mailto:office@arkcentre.com.au)

Bank Account transfer and Credit Card options are available for all payments.



We love to recognise our supporters in a number of different ways. Please be in touch to discuss how your financial contribution can be recognised at ARK Centre.

If you have any questions or wish to make a financial contribution to any of the above, please contact the office via [office@arkcentre.com.au](mailto:office@arkcentre.com.au) or **03 8658 4044**.

# Judaism & Israel – Statistics & Facts



There are approximately 16 million Jews in the world today.

Judaism is the world's 10th largest religion.

Only 43% of Jews live in Israel.

Another 43% of Jews live in the USA and Canada.

The remaining 14% of Jews live in communities spread around the world.

In 2022, the highest proportion of immigrants to Israel were from Russia / Ukraine (1,747,250).

The word Judaism is derived from Yehudah or Judah.

Christianity started out as an offshoot of Judaism and developed into its own distinct religion.

Judaism, Christianity, and Islam form what are called the Abrahamic religions.

Orthodox is the largest branch of Judaism.

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- Lectures
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## Testimonials:

*“Our GP Training workshops have been held at the Ark Centre for 2023. They are super friendly and accommodating all requests, especially the Ark Centre General Manager Jo Star, who is a wonderful person to work with. The catering is amazing, all our attendees enjoy it and appreciate the varieties of their food.”*

– Radeeka Wickramaratne; Program Support Officer RACGP

*“My involvement with Ark Centre began with a large event held prior to COVID. This influenced us to undertake a series of workshops in 2023 and we have been very happy with the experience. The venue is located close to extensive free parking and has been able to accommodate both small and large groups (+/- for very reasonable prices). The staff are very responsive and helpful, and the catering is fantastic. I would definitely recommend Ark Centre as a venue for similar functions.”*

– Pauline Gunn; Training Coordination Team Leader RACGP

*“ARK provides not only a spacious facility but a friendly face that greets you, catering that is divine and a facility where we can connect with our people in a quiet yet comfortable setting at a very affordable rate. Working offsite is critical at times so we can separate from our office to facilitate meetings, training and other business functions in an intimate setting. ARK gives you that separation and allows us to work freely and comfortably.*

*To Jo and her team at ARK you guys are the best and I would certainly recommend the facility to anyone.”*

– Sam Pupillo; Chief People Officer & Customer Experience Director Gerflor Australasia

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# Stay Connected

Don't miss out on the latest happenings at ARK Centre! We offer various options for staying connected, enabling you to join the ARK Centre conversation. You can also inform us of important dates, such as yahrtzeits, smachot, and others, so we can send you reminders and acknowledge them accordingly. For this purpose, please email us at [office@arkcentre.com.au](mailto:office@arkcentre.com.au).

## Newsletter

Our weekly newsletter, sent every Thursday, features upcoming events and speakers, exciting Shabbat and Yom Tov programs, Rabbi Gabi's thought-provoking weekly message, and any pertinent news from around the community. If you aren't currently subscribed to our newsletter and would like to receive it, please contact the office or visit our website, where you can sign up at the bottom of the home page.

## Ark Centre Website – [www.thearkcentre.org.au](http://www.thearkcentre.org.au)

Our website is your go-to source for all information regarding life cycle events, programs, and upcoming events.

## Social Media

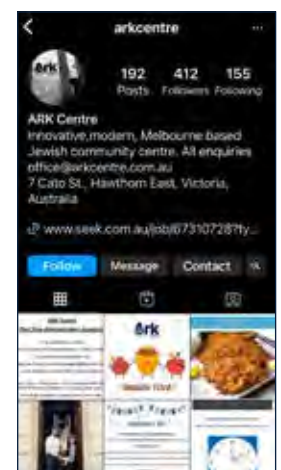
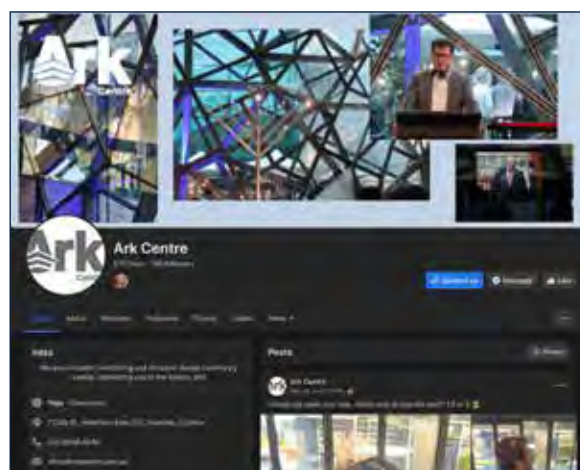
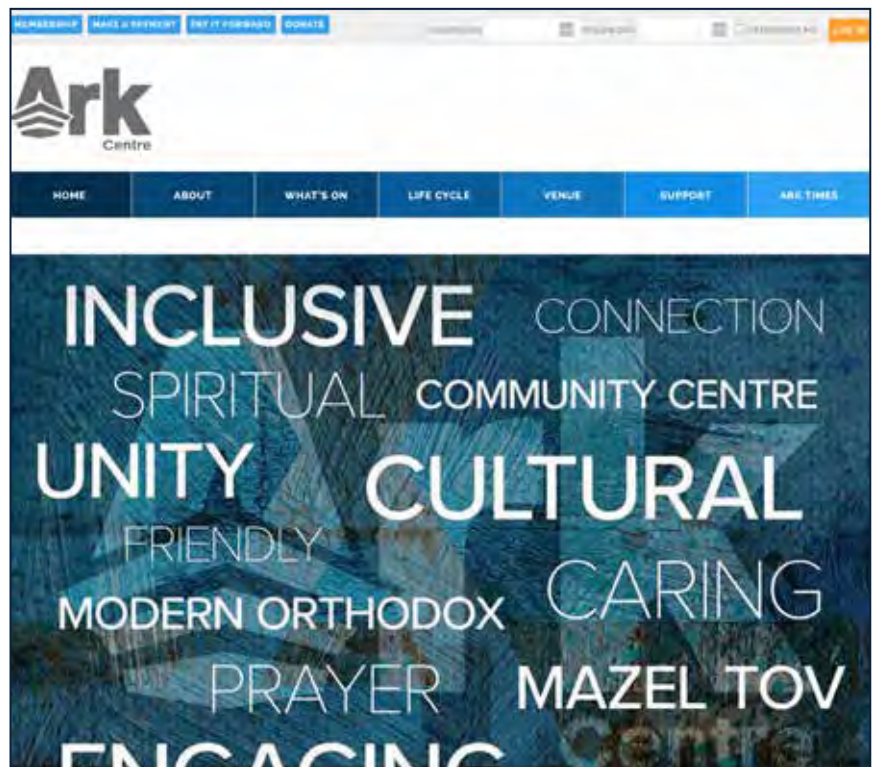
We post video messages, event reminders and some great pictures too!



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# High Holy Days

## Rosh Hashanah

**Friday 15 September**

*Erev Rosh Hashanah*

5:52pm – Candle Lighting

6:15pm – Service commences  
(finish approx. 6.30pm)

Kiddush provided before service



**Saturday 16 September**

*First Day Rosh Hashanah*

9.30am – Shacharit (finish approx. 12:45pm)

There is no Shofar blowing or Tashlich on Shabbat

6:30pm – Mincha Service

Kiddush to follow service

6:50pm – Candle Lighting from pre-existing flame

**Sunday 17 September**

*Second Day Rosh Hashanah*

9:30am – Shacharit (finish approx. 12:45pm)

11:30am – Shofar Blowing (approx.)

Kiddush to follow service

5.15pm – Mincha

5.30pm – Tashlich (meet at ARK Centre)

6:51pm – Yom Tov Ends

## Yom Kippur

**Sunday 24 September**

5:59pm – Fast Commences and  
Candle Lighting

6:15pm – Kol Nidre service



**Monday 25 September**

9:30am – Shacharit

11:15am – Yizkor

1:00pm – Break

5:30pm – Mincha followed by Neilah

6:58pm – Fast concludes

Light refreshments will be served to break the fast

## Succot

**Friday 29 September**

*Erev Succot*

6:04pm – Candle Lighting

6:15pm – Evening service

Kiddush in the succah to follow



**Saturday 30 September**

*First Day Succot*

10:00am – Shacharit

Kiddush to follow service

7:02pm – Candle Lighting from pre-existing flame

**Sunday 1 October**

*Second Day Succot*

10:00am – Shacharit

Kiddush to follow service

8:03pm – Yom Tov ends

**Friday 6 October**

*Shemini Atzeret*

6.15pm – Shabbat service

7:10pm – Candle Lighting

**Saturday 7 October**

*Shemini Atzeret*

10:00am – Shacharit

11:00am – Yizkor

*Simchat Torah*

7:00pm – Mincha

Kiddush and dancing to follow service

8:09pm – Candle Lighting from pre-existing flame

**Sunday 8 October**

10:00am – Shacharit

Kiddush and dancing to follow service

8:10pm – Yom Tov ends

“

The Ark Centre is all about community, learning and extending what I think I understand about current events. It gives me opportunities to grow and develop. – Anne Josefsberg

# Kabbalat Shabbat

## Symbolic reasons behind the traditions.

Kabbalat Shabbat is the traditional Jewish service held on Friday evenings, welcoming the arrival of Shabbat, the day of rest. The service includes several rituals and prayers which have specific meanings and symbolisms.



### Candle Lighting

It is traditional to light the Shabbat candles during the 18 minute window right before sundown on Friday, which marks the beginning of Shabbat.

Shabbat candles must burn at least until you recite Hamotzi, the blessing over bread, and some sources say that they should burn for two to three hours.

It seems to have originated as an extension of the practice of lighting a flame before Shabbat precisely because flames may not be kindled on the Sabbath. This flame was a source of light after the sun went down.



### Reciting Prayers

The recitation of prayers during Kabbalat Shabbat is meant to bring joy and spiritual elevation. Each prayer has a specific meaning and purpose.

### Singing Lecha Dodi

The song Lecha Dodi is a joyful welcome to the arrival of Shabbat. It invites the Shechinah (Divine Presence) to join us and brings a sense of unity among the community.

*L'chah dodi likrat kalah,  
p'nei Shabbat n'kab'lah.*

*Hitnaari, mei-afat kumi,  
livshi bigdei tifarteich ami,  
al yad ben Yishai Beit haLachmi,  
karvah el nafshi g'alah.*

*Hitor'ri, hitor'ri,  
ki va oreich, kumi ori,  
uri uri shir dabeiri  
k'vod Adonai alayich niglah.*



### Saying Kiddush

Kiddush is the blessing over wine or grape juice that sanctifies the Shabbat. It is a reminder of God's creation of the world and His blessing of the seventh day as a day of rest.

### Two loaves of Challah

When our ancestors travelled in the desert for forty years, they subsisted on the manna\* that miraculously fell from heaven every day. A double portion fell on Friday – one portion for that day, and another for the day of rest that followed. That is why we place two challahs on the Shabbat table, to commemorate this double portion that fell on Friday in honour of the Shabbat.

The challah we eat on Shabbat is actually in place of that manna. Since the manna was encased between layers of dew that preserved its freshness, we envelop the challahs between the cutting board and the challah cover, reliving the manna miracle at our Shabbat meal.

\* Manna – the miraculous edible substance that fell each day from heaven during the 40-year period between the Exodus and the conquest of Israel, providing our ancestors with sustenance throughout their travels in the desert.



### Sabbath Meal

One of the main reasons why we eat a big meal on the Sabbath is to honour and celebrate the day. According to Jewish tradition, the Sabbath is a day of rest and spiritual rejuvenation. It is a time to disconnect from the pressures of daily life and focus on God and family.

Additionally, sharing meals with family and friends is an essential part of Jewish culture, and the Sabbath is a perfect occasion to gather and enjoy each other's company. Shabbat dinner often includes traditional foods such as challah, chicken soup, roast meat, and various vegetable dishes.

Overall, the big meal on the Jewish Sabbath is a way to observe and celebrate the traditions and values of Judaism while also enjoying the company of loved ones.

# ARK's Favourite Recipes

## Roasted Vegetables & Hummus Salad

Serves: 4-6 as a side

Preparation time: 50 minutes

### Ingredients:

- 1 sweet potato, chopped into chunks
- ½ head cauliflower, broken into florets
- 2 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- ½ tsp ground cumin
- ½ tsp ground cinnamon
- 1 tsp sea salt
- 1 head broccoli, chopped into florets
- 500g hummus
- 1 cup baby tomatoes, or chopped cherry tomatoes
- 1 spring onion, finely chopped
- ¼ bunch mint, leaves finely chopped
- ¼ bunch parsley, leaves & stems finely chopped
- 2 tbsp dukkah

### For the dressing:

- 1 tbsp extra virgin olive oil
- 2 tbsp balsamic vinegar
- 2 tsp maple syrup
- ¼ tsp cinnamon
- 1 small garlic clove, minced
- pinch sea salt



### Method:

1. Preheat the oven to 200°C or 400°F.
2. Line a baking tray with baking paper.
3. Spread the sweet potato and cauliflower across the tray.
4. Drizzle the extra virgin olive oil over the top.
5. Sprinkle the spices and sea salt over the top and use your hands to toss the ingredients together.
6. Bake in the preheated oven for 30 minutes.
7. Whilst the vegetables are baking, prepare the dressing. Whisk together all of the ingredients in a small bowl or jar. Set aside.
8. Once the sweet potato and cauliflower have been roasting for 30 minutes, remove from the oven and toss.
9. Add the broccoli florets to the tray with an additional drizzle of extra virgin olive oil. Return to the oven to bake for a further 15 minutes.
10. When ready to serve, spread the hummus across the base of a serving plate.
11. Add the roasted vegetables, tomatoes, spring onion and chopped herbs.
12. Drizzle half of the dressing over the top and garnish with the dukkah.
13. Serve with the additional dressing on the side.

“

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## Chulent

Serves: 8 people

Cooking time: 24 hours

Preparation time: 30 minutes

### Ingredients:

- 4kg small potatoes (peeled and washed)
- ½ cup pearl barley (rinsed)
- 1.5 cup fresh cannellini beans (rinsed)
- 2kg beef top rib
- 1 brown onion – peeled
- 2 tablespoons salt
- White pepper, garlic powder – to taste



### Method:

1. Spray large pot with oil spray
2. Place following in pot in this order:  
1/3 of potatoes  
1/3 of beef top rib  
1/3 of potatoes  
Pearl barley  
¼ cup of water  
1/3 of beef top rib  
¾ cup cannellini beans  
Remaining potatoes, except for approx. 4  
¾ cup cannellini beans  
Last 4 potatoes  
Remaining beef top rib  
White pepper, garlic powder to taste  
Dissolve salt in one cup of water and pour in pot  
1 onion peeled
3. Fill pot with water until ingredients are covered
4. Put on stove, lid on and wait to boil
5. Skim top, let simmer with lid on for ½ hour
6. Cover top of pot with foil and then place lid on (make sure sealed tightly)
7. Place in preheated oven at 180 degrees, fan forced
8. After 4 hours turn heat down to 120 degrees

## Strawberry Mousse

Serves: 8 people

Preparation time: 15 minutes

### Ingredients:

- 1 punnet of strawberries
- 1 cup caster sugar
- 1 egg white

### Method:

1. Wash strawberries and remove leaf/stem.
2. Separate egg white.
3. Place all ingredients in mix master bowl and beat until mixture is very 'fluffy'.
4. Place mixture in dessert bowl and place in freezer until ready to serve.

\*\* Optional: Decorate top with sliced strawberries



## Shana Tova from Vest Advisory

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