



February 11, 2021
29 Shevat 5781

Dear Heilicher Families,

We are so excited to be celebrating the Holiday of Purim in school on **Friday, February 26, 2021**. **Purim** is a Jewish holiday that commemorates the saving of the Jewish people from Haman in Persia circa 357 B.C.E. The story is recorded in [The Biblical Scroll of Esther/Megillat Esther](#). Modern customs to celebrate the holiday include:

- Dressing up in costume
- Chanting *Megillat Esther*
- Exchanging gifts of food and drink known as [mishloah manot](#)
- Eating a celebratory meal known as a [se'udat Purim](#)
- Donating gifts to the poor known as *mattanot la-evyonim*
- Putting on a [Purim shpiel](#) - a funny and festive theatrical performance

As a community day school, Heilicher's celebration of Purim will allow opportunities for everyone, both children and adults, to partake in all of these customs. **Here's how we will celebrate at Heilicher!**

- **Costumes:** Students are encouraged to dress in costume for the day. *Please note that costumes must be consistent with our dress code policy - faces must be visible and they may not include any weapons or offensive language.*
- **8:45-9:35 a.m.: [Megillah Reading](#):** We invite you to join us as our eighth-graders will read sections of the *Megillah* with seventh-graders performing vignettes, facilitated by Anthony Sisler-Newman, drama teacher in our creative intensives. **Students and staff who wish to hear a full reading of the *Megillah* are encouraged to attend their synagogue's reading and will not be marked tardy for coming to school by 9:30 a.m.** Each local synagogue will offer *Megillah* readings over the course of Purim, and we suggest checking their websites to find times and other details.
- **11:00-11:35 a.m.: [Purim Shpiel and Kabbalat Shabbat](#):** Join us as our sixth-graders perform an original Purim *Shpiel* (satirical rendition of the Book of Esther).
- **11:45 a.m.-12:15 p.m.: Purim Se'udah (Festive Meal):** Heilicher will provide [Hamantaschen](#) (a traditional Purim baked good) or a gluten free option at lunch to

every student and staff member to enhance a Purim *seu'dah*/festive meal, and local clergy and educators will Zoom in with “Purim Torah” (satire).

- ***Mishloah Manot (Gift Baskets)***: Due to COVID health concerns, we will not be exchanging *Mishloach Manot* at school this year. However, we encourage families to participate in this *mitzvah* from home.
- ***Mattanot La-eyyonim (Gifts to People in Need)***: Continuing our community commitment to *tzedakah*/charity and in the theme of costuming, aka ‘dressing up,’ we will collect clothing items for people in need by classroom. *Grades K-2 - Socks; Grades 3-5- winter hats or gloves; Grades 6-8: t-shirts or underwear.*

Also connected to Purim - Thursday, February 25, 2021, is a Jewish fast day known as [***Ta'anit Esther/תענית אסתר***](#) commemorating the fast that Esther/אסתר asked the Jewish people to observe as she prepared herself to approach the king and reverse Haman/המון's decree as told in the story of Purim/פורים in Megillat Esther/מגילת אסתר.

Wishing you all a happy Purim!

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