Sue Horowitz’s lyrics for Hineh Mah Tov are read by everyone “Together.” The lyrics are another expression of the harmony we seek “as we travel along the path of our lives.”

**PAGE 17/18: BLESSING OVER THE FESTIVAL CANDLES**

Historically, women lit the candles and recited the blessing. Today, men and women may participate equally in the rituals and ceremonies of our ancestors.

Those participating in the blessing of the Festival candles traditionally rise before reciting the blessing.

In order to create the most inclusive experience for those unfamiliar with Hebrew or with family traditions, a Reader may recite the words for each blessing in Hebrew one phrase at a time, with everyone joining in unison after each phrase and then in English. (See instructions for each blessing that follows.)

**PAGE 21/22: KIDDUSH: BLESSING FOR THE FIRST CUP OF WINE**

Havdalah is a ceremony that marks the symbolic end of Shabbat. When the seder falls on Saturday night, an abbreviated Havdalah service is recited as part of the blessing for the first cup of wine (p. 88).

**PAGE 23: RITUAL WASHING OF THE HANDS**

When more than one person participates in the ritual, it is customary to fill the cup before passing it to the next person.

**PAGE 21/24: PASSOVER SYMBOLS**

Identifying the Passover symbols presents an opportunity to engage children in the seder. Children, if present, may be asked to hold up each symbol as its name is read.

An orange is sometimes added to the seder plate as a symbol of solidarity with gays and lesbians. (See A Passover Checklist, p. 2.) When an orange is added to the seder plate, you may hold up the orange and say: “The orange on our seder plate is a symbol of our solidarity with gays and lesbians, representing the additional fruitfulness of a society that welcomes and includes members with diverse sexual orientations.”

A second seder plate is sometimes placed on the table for vegetarians with a red beet substituted for the shank bone. (See A Passover Checklist, p. 2.) When identifying the symbols on the seder plate, the beet is raised instead of the shank bone.

**PAGE 24: KARPAS: BLESSING FOR THE FRUIT OF THE EARTH**

In some families there is a custom of serving salad or other vegetables, like carrot sticks, after this blessing so that children will not become hungry before the meal is served.

Historically, when a green vegetable was not available in some countries on Passover a potato was substituted. Today, a potato continues to represent the fruit of the earth in some Passover traditions.

**PAGE 25: THE AFIKOMAN: BREAKING THE MIDDLE MATZAH**

The lifting of a piece of matzah is our symbolic invitation to everyone everywhere to join us in our Passover celebration. Matzah is not eaten until the blessing is recited before the meal.

It is the custom in some families to open the door for the stranger and those in need before lifting the matzah and reading this passage.

The Hebrew word afikoman is based on a Greek word meaning “that which comes after the meal.”

In some family traditions a different game is played with the afikoman: After the middle matzah is broken, the afikoman is placed on the seder table. When the service continues, the afikoman may be “stolen,” by children if they are present. In this tradition, the afikoman is redeemed by the seder leader after the meal so that the service may be completed.

**PAGE 27: A SYMBOL OF HOPE AND THE RESPONSIBILITIES OF FREEDOM**

During the Passover seder everyone is encouraged to discuss the contemporary significance of the story of the Exodus. You may create your own questions for family discussion each year or select one or more of the questions that appear in Sharing the Journey.

Early in the seder, on the night we celebrate the efforts of all people to free themselves from oppression, this is a moment in which everyone around the table (regardless of faith or the number of seders attended) can participate in a discussion of who is struggling for freedom today.

During the 1990s, a fourth matzah was added to the three pieces of matzah on the plate to symbolize the acceptance of the challenge to assist Jews in the former Soviet Union and in Ethiopia to achieve freedom from persecution and anti-Semitism.

**PAGE 28/29: LET US REMEMBER: THE HOLOCAUST**

The names of these concentration camps and ghettos where Jews per