Melacha U'Vracha Community Statement & Guidelines

These words are an offering from the heart, rather than a fixed statement. This statement may evolve, as the world and our understanding continue to change.

Melacha U'Vracha is a radical experiment in creating a vibrant, pluralistic, earth-connected and interdependent Jewish community. At the heart of our vision is supporting Jewish ancestral reconnection and deepening our relationship with the living Earth within the diaspora.

This community holds a wide diversity of relationships to the lands and peoples of Israel/Palestine, Zionism, Palestinian liberation movements, and Jewish identity and practice – and we welcome this diversity. In a time of increasing fracture and separation, we firmly believe that gathering together amidst our differences, with our hearts both broken and open, is vital for creating *Olam Haba*, the more beautiful world we dream of. We need all of us and every one of us is wanted.

Remembering how to live, work, and create together and returning to our diverse ancestral practices connects us with our own lineages and reminds us of our shared humanity with all peoples. This is what we will practice together.

We are living in a time of unprecedented social and ecological crisis and heightened violence in many places in the world, including Israel/Palestine. Our vision is that Melacha U'Vracha can be one place to practice and embody a different way, to embrace listening and learning from our differences, healing from historical trauma, trusting in new potential paradigms of Jewish thriving, and leaning into mutual care and shared earthliness with all who call Earth home.

As an organizing team, we want to grow a Jewish community that is firmly rooted in the ancient soil of Jewish wisdom and perhaps no Jewish value is more central than honoring and protecting all life. To us, this means being steadfastly in support of the safety, wellbeing and flourishing of all peoples, Palestinian and Jewish, and being firmly against militarism as a strategy for security. Dehumanization, violence, polarization and war are not a path forward to a liberated, holy, and safe world for anyone or for our shared planet.

You are not required to agree with everything written above, but we do ask everyone attending our gathering to agree to the following community guidelines. The intention of these guidelines is to help us be in community in alignment with our values. We invite you into this shared experiment, which asks each of us to stretch beyond our comfort zones. We acknowledge that these guidelines may not work for everyone, and if that is you, we respect you knowing what you need in these times.

Community Guidelines
We are co-creating a community together that values all life as sacred and envisions an end to all systems of violence. This experience is an experiment. These guidelines are here to help us build a healing and impactful space for seeding vibrant Jewish futures.

Communicate respectfully about all people(s) and refrain from using violent or discriminatory language.

Be willing to acknowledge multiple truths. We all have something to learn from one another and welcome people to engage across differences when there is mutual interest and capacity.

Ask for consent If someone does not wish to engage, honor that boundary.

Use "I" statements rather than "we". Refrain from speaking on behalf of anyone else. This leaves space for honoring a diversity of experiences and perspectives.

Practice listening more than you speak. It can be healing to practice listening deeply first, with generosity and respect.

Be open to learning and transformation. Let's practice having our hearts and minds open enough to be impacted or even transformed by others.

Assume best intentions and work generously with one another. We won't be perfect and that is okay.

If you feel that someone is not honoring these agreements, please consider sharing feedback with them directly. If you are unable to do so, see a pattern of this behavior, or notice harmful behavior, please let an organizer know.

If someone is not honoring these community agreements, the organizing team may ask them to leave the gathering with no refund.

Thank you to Let My People Sing! for inspiring this approach to our community guidelines.