



## NEWS RELEASE

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### **AJL ANNOUNCES HOLIDAY HIGHLIGHTS TITLES FOR SPRING 2022**

For immediate release, February 27, 2022 — The Association of Jewish Libraries is pleased to announce that five titles have been selected for its seasonal AJL Holiday Highlights list, celebrating Shabbat, Havdalah, and Passover. These titles are AJL's picks for the best Jewish holiday children's books of Spring 2022.

Titles that are selected as Holiday Highlights exemplify the highest standards of authentic Jewish representation and holiday spirit in both writing and illustration. A committee of expert judges recommends these books for use by families, in schools, and in libraries. AJL hopes that the publishing world will look to the quality of these examples when creating new children's books about Jewish holidays.

Holiday Highlights titles are named twice a year, for the spring and fall publishing seasons. Submissions are being accepted now for the Fall 2022 list. Please email [holidayhighlights@jewishlibraries.org](mailto:holidayhighlights@jewishlibraries.org) to send digital review copies or to request instructions for sending print review copies.

The Spring 2022 AJL Holiday Highlights are:

#### **SHABBAT & HAVDALAH**

**Shabbat Shalom & A New Week, both by Vicki Weber, illustrated by Shirley Ng-Benitez, Apples and Honey Press (5/3/22)**

This pair of board books introduces the weekend rituals associated with welcoming Shabbat on Friday night and saying goodbye to Shabbat on Saturday night. Spare yet charming illustrations feature toddlers of varying skin tones, complemented by rhyming couplets.

#### **PASSOVER**

**A Persian Passover by Etan Basseri, illustrated by Rashin Kheiriyeh, Kalaniot (3/18/22)**

Sibling hijinks threaten Passover until a friendly neighbor comes to the rescue. Bright collage illustrations capture mid-century Iran and highlight the details of Sephardic Passover preparation unique to the setting.

**Alone Together on Dan Street by Erica Cohen Lyons, illustrated by Jen Jamieson, Apples & Honey Press (3/1/22)**

This lovely Passover tale captures the spirit of the holiday, and the concept of community, all couched in the isolation of Covid. As Mira's family prepares for Passover in Jerusalem during the lock-down, she finds a safe way to bring the whole neighborhood together.

**Raquela's Seder by Joel Edward Stein, illustrated by Sara Ugolotti, Kar-Ben Publishing (2/1/22)**

Set during the Spanish Inquisition, a young girl and her parents take to their fishing boat to celebrate a Passover seder in secret. Patterned textiles infuse the moonlit illustrations while the parallels between the Exodus and the Inquisition invoke resonances across Jewish history.

Find a PDF listing the Spring 2022 AJL Holiday Highlights titles [HERE](#).

AJL's Holiday Highlights judges are experts in their field:

Robbin Friedman is the head of children's services at the Chappaqua Library in Chappaqua, NY. She has served on ALSC's Newbery committee, written for *School Library Journal*, *The Horn Book* and *Guessing Geisel*, and taught Hebrew school once upon a time.

Amy Lilien-Harper has been a professional children's librarian since 1995. She has served on the Newbery committee, the Caldecott committee and the ALA Notable children's recordings committees. She reviews picture books for *School Library Journal*, and has served four times on the Nutmeg Committee, which chooses books for the Connecticut Children's choice awards.

Sylvie Shaffer is the PreK-8 librarian at the Capitol Hill Day School in Washington, DC and is active in several overlapping kidlit-focused communities including ALSC, YALSA, and Capitol Choices. Sylvie served on AJL's 2019 and 2020 Sydney Taylor Book Awards as well as on ALSC's 2018 Geisel Committee.

The Association of Jewish Libraries, the leading authority on Judaic librarianship, is an international professional organization that fosters access to information and research in all forms of media relating to all things Jewish. The Association promotes Jewish literacy and scholarship and provides a community for peer support and professional development. Learn more at [jewishlibraries.org](http://jewishlibraries.org).

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