



Emma Mas (she/her/hers)

Born with dual American and Canadian citizenship, I made the uncomplicated decision to move from Seattle where I was born and raised, to Vancouver to attend the University of British Columbia (and pay domestic tuition!). In my second year of university I met my partner, Samuel, whereupon I promptly fell in love and made the move permanent. In my third year, I first ventured into Or Shalom with a friend, both of us curious about cultivating richer practices from the memories of our childhoods. In my fourth year, I graduated with a degree in Psychology and Family Studies, because I saw myself in some sort of helping profession. It was just weeks after graduation that I found my calling in birth work.

I became a doula, a childbirth companion and educator. My practice is founded on being inclusive, evidence-based, and sliding-scale. I believe in the far-reaching value of fulfilling birth experiences, that families deserve to feel safe, heard, and powerful no matter the circumstances, and that birth and postpartum support should be accessible to all those who seek it. I feel deeply honoured by the trust and privilege to attend to families in this incredible and transformative transition.

However, attending births is on hold for the moment, as Sam and I prepare for the arrival of our own baby this winter. I am a patrilineal Jew who has chosen to confirm my Jewish identity in advance of this child's birth, with the guidance of Rabbi Hannah. Sam is a Chinese Buddhist, whose practice is informed by the folk traditions of his ancestral village in Guangdong. Being an interfaith family is not without challenges - but it is also marked by deep admiration and respect for each other's heritage and traditions. Sam has been my most dedicated supporter as I reconnect with my Jewish identity, and he is always eager for a second (or third) portion of the inevitable leftover gefilte fish from our Passover Seders. We look forward to introducing the newest member of our family, and of the community, to you soon.

I am tremendously grateful to have found the Or Shalom community. My special thanks to Dael Adams Segal, for her simultaneously grounding and uplifting leadership and sisterhood in Women's Torah Study. And to Rabbi Hannah, for her invaluable support in my confirmation, and suggestion that the child of an interfaith family might not be half-deficient, but instead doubly blessed. I feel lucky to be with you all.

When we can be together in person again - please come talk to me about pregnancy, birth, JewBus, and navigating interfaith families...or maybe more lighthearted passions of mine, dog-friendly hikes and baking!