

# SHARED BLESSING



Staff photo by Andy Molloy

**RABBI SUSAN BULBA CARVUTTO** blesses matzo Thursday while explaining the Jewish holiday of Passover at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Augusta. Members of the Jewish and Christian faiths celebrated Maundy Thursday and Passover on Saturday together.

## Holiness of Passover brings Christians, Jews, together

### STAFF REPORTS

AUGUSTA — Christian and Jewish celebrations came together Thursday night as the Last Supper was observed around a shared table.

The Rev. Steve Foote, interim rector of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, joined Rabbi Susan Bulba Carvutto of Temple Beth El at the parish house with other parishioners.

Foote noted that both religions observe the

Passover meal as central to their faith traditions.

For Christians, Maundy Thursday, or Holy Thursday, recalls how Jesus Christ celebrated the Passover meal with his disciples, breaking bread with them before his crucifixion. For Jewish people, the Passover — which Temple Beth El will observe Saturday with a community seder and prayer services — commemorates the story of the exodus, in which the ancient Israelites were freed from slavery in Egypt.

"The whole service took place in the dining room because it's built around the meal,"

Foote said. "This week is Passover as well as Easter, so I'm making an effort to have a connection with the Passover seder and the Last Supper that is going to relate to the Eucharist that is celebrated at the dining room table."

During the Thursday night service, Carvutto explained the symbolic elements of the seder and Passover meal. Those gathered then had a small soup supper and celebrated the symbol of Jesus becoming the holy Eucharist.

"It's a nice way for the community to meet one another and to celebrate connection rather than conflict," Foote said.