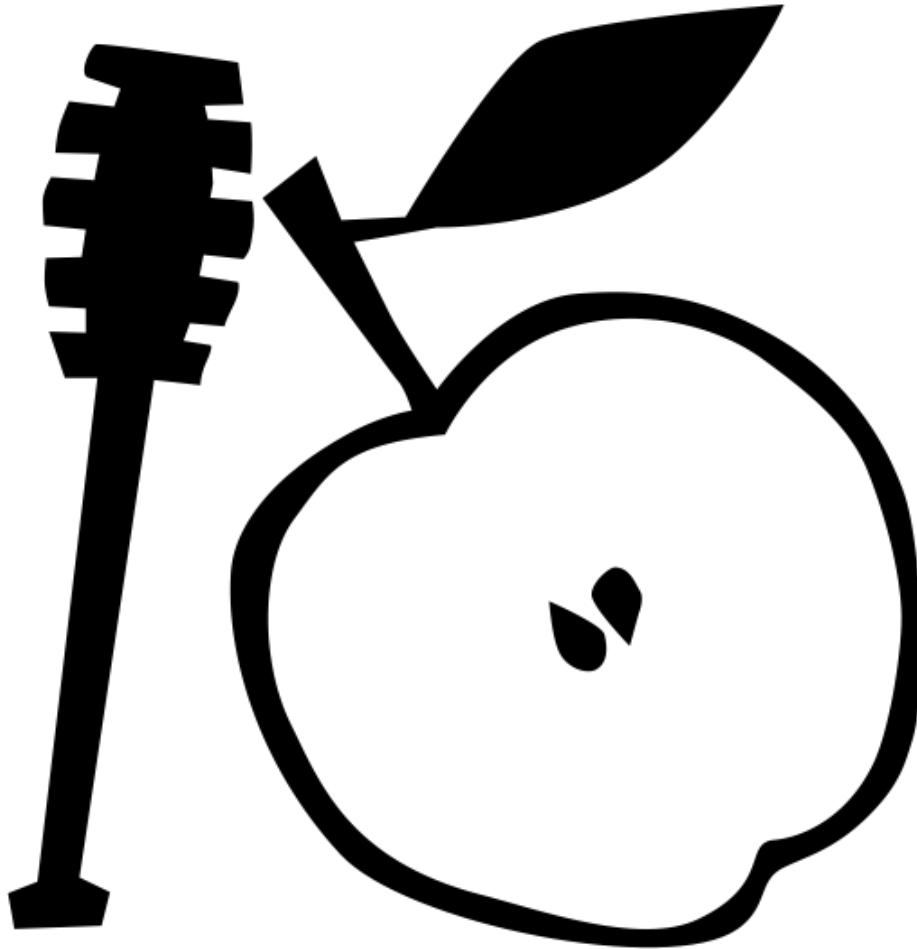


Kol HaNeshamah BaBayit
KH @ Home



High Holy Days 5781

September 2020 / Elul 5780

Dear friends,

Bruchim haba'im! Welcome!

Thank you for choosing to join the KH community for the High Holy Days this year. While we may be socially distant, we hope that we can create a sense of community and offer a meaningful experience of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur this year.

This packet includes resources to support your celebration of the holidays at home. You will find a guide to holiday rituals and traditions, suggestions for prayer at home, and additional readings that we will use on the second day of Rosh Hashanah. I hope you will find them useful and meaningful.

Our experience of the *Yamim Nora'im*, the Days of Awe, will be very different this year. Whether we are at home, gathered with family, or participating in one of our outdoor gatherings, we are all active participants in the Kol HaNeshamah community and co-creators of the prayer experience. I am grateful to be on this journey with all of you, and excited to welcome the new year together.

Whether you are a long time member of KH, have joined us for the holidays for many years, or are participating in our holiday services for the first time, I would love to hear from you and get to know you better. Please feel free to reach out to me at rabbi@khnj.org at any time.

L'shanah tovah tikateivu v'techateimu - May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year, and may we be blessed with hope, joy, and sweetness at this time.

B'shalom,

Rabbi Lindsey Healey-Pollack

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Home Rituals for the Holidays

For **Rosh Hashanah**, we prepare our homes and ourselves in much the same way we would for Shabbat.

Candlelighting

We light candles on both evenings of Rosh Hashanah and before Kol Nidre on Yom Kippur. You can find the blessings in our mahzor on p. 30 for Rosh Hashanah and p. 199 for Yom Kippur.

On the first day of Rosh Hashanah and the evening of Yom Kippur, candlelighting takes place before sunset. Light your candles and recite the blessings over candles and shehecheyanu.

On the second day of Rosh Hashanah, candle lighting takes place later, after dusk. Traditionally, to avoid lighting a new fire on the holiday, we transfer from an existing flame. Many people have the custom of lighting a *yahrzeit* candle alongside their holiday candles on the first day for this purpose.

Celebrating with a Holiday Meal

Just as on Shabbat and other holidays, we celebrate Rosh Hashanah with a festive meal. The meal begins with a special Kiddush for Rosh Hashanah over wine or grape juice. The blessings are included in many *bentschers/birkonim*, and can be found on p. 31 in our Mahzor. Because the first day of Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbat, we include additions for Shabbat.

After kiddush and ritual washing of hands, we say *hamotzi*, the blessing before eating bread. Many people have the custom of making or purchasing round challah or challah containing raisins for the holiday.

We add additional blessings and eat an apple dipped in honey, to symbolize our wishes for a sweet new year. These blessings are on p. 32 in the mahzor.

Many people also have the custom of eating other symbolic foods to represent our hopes for the year ahead. Some common foods include a pomegranate - so that our good deeds can be as numerous as the seeds of the pomegranate or a fish head - so that we can be like the head and not the tail. Many *bentschers/birkonim* include these and more. You can also do some research online to find other examples, or make up your own!

Many people also have the tradition on the second night of Rosh Hashanah to eat a fruit that you haven't tasted yet that year to bring newness to the day - and to have something new to say the *shehecheyanu* blessing for!

Lunch - after morning services on both days of Rosh Hashanah, we have another holiday meal that includes kiddush and a blessing over challah (p. 32).

Guide to High Holy Day Prayer at Home

While we will provide guidance through our streaming services, you may find the following information helpful when praying at home or at one of our home-based gatherings.

While it is ideal to pray with a minyan when you are able, you can also pray individually or in a small group. Although KH will not be streaming afternoon and evening services for Rosh Hashanah, you can recite the *tefillot* on your own as well. You can pray in Hebrew, or in any language that you understand.

The prayer services for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are longer than typical Shabbat and holiday services and contain many additional prayers that we only say on these days. It can be overwhelming and a lot to take in!

The prayer services for the holidays can be thought of as an anthology - a collection of prayers, poetry, and Biblical texts that Jewish communities have found meaningful throughout the centuries. The holiday prayer book KH uses, Mahzor Lev Shalem, contains additional commentary and readings on the side of the page that you may want to explore.

Some words and metaphors may speak to you; others might not. That is ok. Take in what you need. This experience is for you, and you can make it yours.

Maariv for Rosh Hashanah - p. 2

The evening service for both days of Rosh Hashanah begins on p. 2 in the Mahzor Lev Shalem. Because the first evening falls on Shabbat this year, there are additional psalms and blessings to include. These are marked with red prompts in your mahzor.

The service follows a similar structure as other evening services, consisting of the core components of *shema* and its blessings and the silent *amidah*. When praying without a minyan, we do not include *barchu*, the call to prayer and the various versions of *kaddish*.

Rosh Hashanah Morning - p. 33

Morning services for Rosh Hashanah are built on the same structure as all morning services, including the psalms of *pesukei d'zimra*, *shema*, *amidah*, Torah reading, and the *musaf* (additional) service. The morning services for the holidays add many different *piyyutim*, liturgical poems exploring the themes of the day - God's sovereignty, our appeal for divine mercy and forgiveness.

Rosh Hashanah Afternoon - p. 178

KH will not be livestreaming this service. The service includes the Amidah as well as Torah reading for Shabbat on the first day.

Yom Kippur Evening - p. 202

Kol Nidre

We begin Kol Nidre before the sun sets and Yom Kippur officially begins. It is an annulment of vows - vows that we may unintentionally take between now and the year ahead. The sifrei Torah are taken out as “witnesses” to this moment.

Maariv service

The evening service follows the general structure of a typical evening service, which includes *Barkhu*, the call to prayer, *Shema* and its blessings, and the silent *Amidah*. On Yom Kippur, we include a *viddui*, a confessional prayer, as part of the *Amidah*.

The Yom Kippur evening service continues with *S’lichot*, prayers for forgiveness. This section contains three cycles of selichot, including *piyyutim* (liturgical poetry) on the theme of forgiveness, selections from the Hebrew Bible, and repetition of the thirteen divine attributes emphasizing God’s mercy. We conclude the evening service together with a communal *Viddui*, consisting of a short (*ashamnu*) and long (*Al Chet*) confessional prayer. It is customary to stand if you are able and to strike your chest over your heart when saying each line. This section is followed by concluding prayers, including *Avinu Malkeinu*.

Yom Kippur Morning - p. 33

Morning services for Yom Kippur are built on the same structure as all morning services, including the psalms of *pesukei d’zimra*, *shema*, *amidah*, Torah reading. The morning services for the holidays add many different *piyyutim*, liturgical poems exploring the themes of the day - God’s sovereignty, our appeal for divine mercy and forgiveness. We also include the *yizkor* service, when we remember family and friends who have died.

The *musaf* (additional) service includes sections recalling the martyrdom of our ancestors and a retelling of the Yom Kippur ritual that was performed by the High Priest when the Temple stood.

Yom Kippur Afternoon - p. 360

Includes the *amidah*, Torah reading, and a special haftarah reading of the entire Book of Jonah.

Neilah - Concluding Service - p. 391

Yom Kippur is unique in that it is the only day on the Jewish calendar when we have 5 prayer services over the course of the day. At this concluding service, we imagine ourselves standing before the open gates of forgiveness in the final hours of Yom Kippur.

We conclude with the blowing of the shofar and singing L’shanah haba’ah birushalayim! Next year in Jerusalem!

Halakhic Guidance for Using Technology on the Holidays

Congregation Kol HaNeshamah is pleased to offer our first ever virtual High Holy Day experience!

Since the beginning of the coronavirus pandemic, I have been in touch with the Rabbinical Assembly, which has offered guidance for rabbis and communities on providing services online. The Committee on Jewish Law and Standards of the Conservative Movement has recently published a *teshuva* (responsum on a question of Jewish law) about the use of technology to hold services on Shabbat and holidays.

Recognizing the diversity of practice in the KH community, we seek to create a High Holy Day prayer and learning experience that is meaningful, inclusive, and respectful of traditional Jewish observance.

We have hired a professional videographer who will be responsible for setting up equipment and live streaming our services. Services will be a one-way stream that is accessible via a link. Unlike other virtual experiences we have offered, others will not be able to see or hear you through the computer or device.

With that in mind, here are some suggestions for accessing our live streamed services with the spirit of the day in mind:

- Make sure you have any needed materials before the holiday begins. Those who registered had the opportunity to pick up a physical copy of the mahzor and this packet before the holidays. A digital version of the mahzor is also available for purchase via the Rabbinical Assembly website.
- Turn on your device and navigate to the webpage before the holiday begins on Friday evening.
- Adjust your device settings to minimize your need to interact with the device during the holiday: make sure your sound is on, screen brightness is comfortable, and so that it doesn't go to "sleep" automatically.
- You can cover your keyboard and mouse/trackpad as a reminder and physical barrier
- You may wish to create a designated area for your computer or device that is separate from where you plan to eat, relax, gather with family, etc. before our program begins.
- If you find you need to make an adjustment to the device during the holiday, you can do so in a way that is different from your usual way - for example, by using your non-dominant hand or the back of your hand.

Readings for Reflection and Discussion
Rosh Hashanah Day 2

Michelle Alexander, *The New Jim Crow*, 2010

Much has been written about the ways in which people manage to deny, even to themselves, that extraordinary atrocities, racial oppression, and other forms of human suffering have occurred or are occurring. Criminologist Stanley Cohen wrote perhaps the most important book on the subject, *States of Denial*. The book examines how individuals and institutions - victims, perpetrators, and bystanders - know about yet deny the occurrence of oppressive acts. They see only what they want to see and wear blinders to avoid seeing the rest. This has been true about slavery, genocide, torture, and every form of systemic oppression.

Cohen emphasizes that denial, though deplorable, is complicated. It is not simply a matter of refusing to acknowledge an obvious, though uncomfortable, truth. Many people “know” and “not-know” the truth about human suffering at the same time. In his words, “Denial may be neither a matter of telling the truth nor intentionally telling a lie. There seem to be states of mind, or even whole cultures, in which we know and don’t know at the same time.”

Rev. Anthony A. Johnson, June 3, 2020, Atlanta Jewish Times

Those of us who seek to once again re-establish black-Jewish relations in Atlanta have to learn how to prioritize one another’s efforts. And in order for our respective cultures to understand one another’s needs, there must first be “real” dialogue, real understanding. Understand that each and every day, every one of your black friends in Atlanta and across America, including me, lives with the reality of being killed by police officers. Many Jews are passing as white. Black Atlantans need you to be proud kippah-wearing Jews and stop passing as white (to those who it applies to) and experience the “inconvenience” of being people of color (which is what you are) even if you’re Ashkenazi. My black is beautiful. And YOUR black is beautiful.

Atlanta, we know that there is power in numbers. The truthful acknowledgment of Jews in Atlanta, throughout the Southeast and around the world as people of color will not only allow you to be your authentic selves, a proud people who protested and subsequently defeated Pharaoh of the Torah/Old Testament, but it will cause a deep, transformational change in your hearts toward your black brothers and sisters, understanding the plight of blacks in white Atlanta and white America feeling with “empathy” versus “sympathy” because we have the same Pharaoh in common.

Maimonides, Mishneh Torah, Laws of Teshuva 2:9

Neither repentance nor the Day of Atonement atone for any save for sins committed between a person and God, for instance, one who ate forbidden food, or had forbidden sexual relations and the like; but sins between a person and his or her fellow, for instance, one injures his neighbor, or curses his neighbor or plunders him, or offends him in like matters, is not absolved unless he makes restitution of what he owes and begs the forgiveness of his neighbor. And, although he makes restitution of the monetary debt, he is obliged to pacify him and to beg his forgiveness. Even if he offended his neighbor only in words, he is obliged to appease him and implore him till he is forgiven by him. If his neighbor does not want to forgive him, he should bring a committee of three friends to implore and ask of him; if the neighbor is not convinced by them, he (the offender) should bring a second, even a third committee. If he still does not want (to forgive) he may leave him to himself and pass on, for the sin then rests on the one who refuses forgiveness. But if it happened to be his master, he should go and come to him for forgiveness even a thousand times till he does forgive him.

Rabbi Jason Rubenstein, “In Jewish Tradition, Racism is a Sin,” Forward, June 8, 2020

Repentance is not a private act carried out between a sinner and God, nor is it completed when the sinner has mended his ways. Rather, according to Rabbi Isaac Hutner, one of the 20th century’s most intriguing rabbinic thinkers, repentance means a basic rededication of one’s life to discovering and rectifying the cascading ways that a single act of violence has transformed and broken the lives of others, and therefore the world:

“As long as the destructive effects of a sin remain in the world, a penitent is obligated to repair them, so that the evil and brokenness of the sin remain only in the past. Just as abandoning the sin prevents the sin itself henceforth, so too the repairing of what is broken cuts off the branches of the sin that reach into the future.”

The consequences of our actions race ahead of us, into the future: when a car is wrongfully impounded, a parent can no longer commute to her job, a family is evicted, children lose access to school (and with it, lunch), carrying trauma and missed developmental milestones into their adult lives. Repentance is the act of cauterizing the future against the rupture that metastasizes from the sins of the past. It is important to reform the policies by which vehicles are seized, but it is not repentance: repentance is mending the physical and psychological scars left on those whose lives were upended by the old policy. This isn’t always possible; this potentially-tragic aspect makes repentance an example of what philosophers call a ‘regulative ideal,’ one towards which we must strive even though we will never attain it, like complete fairness or perfect rationality.

Past sins are never confined to the past, but are always woven into the very fabric of the present. This is why we must, as Coates put it, consciously exert an opposite force. Repentance means not only admitting that past actions were wrong, but also reckoning with the fact that, because of those actions, the current state of the world is wrong as well.

High Holiday Service BINGO!

Enjoy this game for the best socially-distant-during-a-pandemic High Holiday experience EVER!

When do we eat?	I identified with one of the people in the Torah readings	I was able to let go of something that I had been holding on to	I heard someone accidentally say "Shabbat Shalom"	I sang along with Alan and Brynn during Rosh Hashanah Musaf
I had a thought-provoking conversation	I thought about ways I want to live differently in the coming year	Ark-opening-related mix-up	I bowed down to the floor during Aleinu in the Musaf Amidah	I helped someone find their place in their mahzor
I flipped through my mahzor to see how many pages were left in the service	I found connection where I didn't expect it	I showed up/logged in! Hineni!	I thought about a prayer in the mahzor in a new way	I got lost in thought or reflection
I can name the types of shofar blasts and I heard all of them!	I discovered a new favorite poem or reflection in the mahzor	I missed being greeted by Bruce at the door	I wished Shanah Tovah to someone I don't know	I feel inspired
I thought about how the holidays were when I was a child	*Technical malfunction*	I was moved by a melody or prayer	I heard or read something that gave me hope for the future	I wore sweatpants to services!