

# HIGH HOLIDAY GUIDE 2020 - 5781



## L'SHANA TOVA!

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## MESSAGE FROM RABBI BENJAMIN WEINER

Dear friends,

I heard a teaching recently about the High Holidays that I'd like to share with you.

We know that one of the primary acts that makes these holidays special is the sounding of the shofar, throughout Rosh Hashanah and as the final ritual act we perform at the end of Yom Kippur. The shofar is so essential to the Days of Awe, in fact, that the Torah knows Rosh Hashanah not as the New Year, but simply as a day on which this instrument is supposed to be sounded and heard. The meaning of the sound has a few interpretations, but it is generally understood as a kind of wake-up call, like an alarm clock going off to rouse us from slumber and demand we face the light of day.

But what was suggested to me recently is that we should think of the shofar not as a once a year noise, but as a sound that is calling and reverberating every hour of every day. We know this to be true: it's not just once a year that a piercing cry rises up from the world to demand our attention. Maybe especially in these times of ours, we can't help but recognize that it is a relentless, everpresent call.

So what makes the High Holidays special? On these days, we actually endeavor, as much as we can, to hear it and respond to it, to let it penetrate through paralysis and inertia and pull us toward a recommitment to our sacred essence and our highest purpose.

It's always a challenge to allow this to happen. How much more so this year, when not only is the cry of the world so clamorous, but, because of social distancing, we can't even all be in the same place to hear the shofar's call? But, please trust me, we will all do our best to realize the intention of these most important days of the Jewish year through the technological solutions that are available to us. And, friends, against all odds I think we are going to have a remarkable experience this year.

L'shana tova,

Rabbi Benjamin Weiner

## ABOUT OUR SERVICES ~ FROM THE RABBI

We will be using Zoom as the platform for our services, as, despite its drawbacks, it's what I think works best in the digital sphere to foster an interactive sense of community. And, after all these months of use, it's basically our shul!

I will be co-leading the services with Hazzan Diana Brewer. I'll be in the main sanctuary, while the Hazzan joins me from the small sanctuary. In addition, we will Zoom in Torah and Haftarah readers, shofar blowers, and other significant participants, including lay leader Catherine Madsen, from their homes. I have invited a few congregants to prepare and offer special reflections on how they understand the meaning of these days, in these times. And, I am excited to announce, I have also invited Jena Schwartz, whose beautiful poetic words have enhanced many of our services, to be the JCA's High Holiday "poet laureate" for this year, drawing on work new and old to embroider the traditional structure of our prayers.

As for that structure: we will have one track of High Holiday services this year, which will be a hybrid of our offerings of years past. The services will combine elements of both our Ne'imah musical and Lev Shalem traditional services, complete with full Torah reading and musaf, co-led by myself and Hazzan Diana Brewer from the two sanctuaries in the JCA building, along with special additional participation by members of the community. Also, on Rosh Hashanah eve, we will also have the opportunity to hear the traditional "President's address" from current JCA board president, Eric Weiss.

As Zoom does not handle live collaborative music well, a subset of our Ne'imah band has been meeting to make a handful of special recordings that we will be including in the flow of services, particularly the evening service, and shacharit on the first day of Rosh Hashanah and on Yom Kippur. Torah services and musaf will be along the traditional lines of the Lev Shalem services, as will the entirety of second day Rosh Hashanah services, and Yom Kippur mincha and Ne'ilah.

We will also be honoring our tradition of special aliyot. The first aliyah on Rosh Hashanah will be for "new arrivals" - families who have welcomed new members over the past year. The last will be for founding members and past presidents, and in between we will have the opportunity to connect as groups with a variety of themes emerging out of the Torah reading and the meaning of the day.

## SERVICES SCHEDULE

### **COMMUNITY SELICHOT - Saturday, September 12**

Evening Program

8:00 - 9:15 pm

### **EREV ROSH HASHANAH - Friday, September 18**

Evening Service

6:00 - 7:30 pm

### **FIRST DAY ROSH HASHANAH - Saturday, September 19**

Morning Services

9:30 am - 1:00 pm

### **SECOND DAY ROSH HASHANAH - Sunday, September 20**

Morning Services

9:30 am - 12:30 pm

### **KOL NIDREI YOM KIPPUR - Sunday, September 27**

Evening Services

6:30 - 8:30 pm

### **YOM KIPPUR - Monday, September 28**

Morning Services

9:30 am - 1:30 pm

Mincha and Neilah

5:00 - 7:30 pm

## SPECIAL PROGRAM FOR THIS YEAR

We would also like you to know about a simply AMAZING program being put together by our teens: a High Holiday experience that combines high tech with nature walking for an immersive and contemplative encounter with the prayers and sounds of this period in the Jewish year. Here is the information they would like to share with you:

"Come join us for an audio-based walking High Holidays service at the Silvio O. Conte Preserve in Hadley! The service consists of a collection of poems, prayers, and readings, read by a large intergenerational group of members of the community, played like a podcast over a wheelchair accessible walk through the woods. You can go anytime between the first day of Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, including either of those two days.

For details on how to attend and a more in-depth description, see our site:

**<https://sites.google.com/view/highholidaysaudio/home>**

NOTE: While on the walk, social distancing rules must be followed; so please wear a mask while near other people."

## YOUTH AND FAMILY PROGRAMS

This year, due to the Covid-19 pandemic, we are unable to offer our usual assortment of family friendly High Holiday events and activities. However, we are offering two zoom-based events with Felicia Sloin. Also, select in-person events will be open to JCA members only, and information on these will be sent out separately. In addition, we have compiled a list of resources from around the country of family friendly events and activities for the High Holidays.

**Friday, September 11 - Zoom @ 5:30 pm - Rosh Hashanah Tuning Up and Tuning In.** Felicia Sloin offers a family-friendly, Friday night singing and music session. Tune in with Felicia to get your family thinking about and ready for the high holidays, with music, movement, prayers, high holidays intentions and more. Aimed at elementary aged children and their families.

**Friday, September 18 - Zoom @ 5:30 pm - Rosh Hashanah Puppet Show with Felicia Sloin.** We will stream a pre-recorded, Rosh Hashanah themed puppet show, presented by Felicia Sloin. Aimed at tots and young elementary children.

### HIGH HOLIDAY RESOURCES

**Camp Havaya, Reconstructionist, Children and Family** ~ Registration required:  
<https://havayasummerprograms.org/highholidays5781/>

Saturday, September 12 (Selikhot)  
Sunday, September 20 (Rosh Hashanah)  
Monday, September 28 (Yom Kippur Stories)  
Week of October 4 (Sukkot)  
Sunday, October 11 (Simchat Torah)

**Rhythm And Ruach Holidays on Demand** (\$10 Rental Fee for streaming)  
<https://vimeo.com/ondemand/rnrchagim>

*Ruach* רוח in Hebrew means wind. But what comes with wind? Energy and spirit! Rhythm 'N' Ruach is a way to connect children and their families to Judaism through upbeat, high energy music and movement; through participation in music with real instruments, such as, strings, percussion, shakers, tambourines and singing. Rhythm 'N' Ruach offers music classes for children and their families, intertwining Jewish music and rhythm instruments. Rhythm 'N' Ruach offers fantastic family and youth Shabbat services as well as High Holiday services that are engaging, fun, and of course, educational. Rhythm 'N' Ruach works with schools and other educational venues to teach music with a focus on *Middot* (character traits). It's a great hands-on tool to connect your child with Judaism.

## HIGH HOLIDAY FOOD DRIVE AND MAHZOR PICK-UP

Here is your socially distanced opportunity to be a part of the physical JCA community, and see the rabbi, just prior to Rosh Hashanah at the following times:

**Wednesday, September 16**

**8:30 am - 12:00 noon**

**Thursday, September 17**

**3:00 - 6:30 pm**

Rabbi Weiner and members of the Tikkun Olam Committee will be hanging out in the JCA parking lot. You are invited to swing by for a quick hello, to sign out a Mahzor (High Holiday prayerbook) for the upcoming High Holiday Zoom services, and to drop off items for the Amherst Survival Center Free Pantry as part of our yearly Yom Kippur food drive.

Consider bringing some of these items from the Amherst Survival Center's "Most Requested List":

- Spaghetti sauce in a jar
- Cooking Oil
- Gluten Free Pasta
- Dairy Free Shelf Stable Milk (soy, almond)
- Advance Similac formula - baby food
- Shelf stable Parmesan cheese
- Protein Powder
- Sugar
- Yeast

**IMPORTANT - PLEASE DO NOT MAKE ANY FOOD DONATIONS AT THE JCA AT ANY TIME OTHER THAN WEDNESDAY 9/16 (8:30 am-12:00 noon) AND THURSDAY 9/17 (3:00-6:30 pm). THANK YOU.**

Please also note that there are other ways to support this year's food drive. If you'd like to donate but cannot get to the drop off, a pickup can be arranged by reaching out to Judith Souweine at [judithsouweine@gmail.com](mailto:judithsouweine@gmail.com).

If you wish to support the Survival Center directly with a cash donation, visit the following link online: <https://amherstsurvival.org/donate>, and please mention "JCA Holiday Food Drive" in the comment section.

We look forward to seeing you - with masks on and from an appropriate distance!

## OPEN DOOR DONATIONS

We open our virtual doors and our hearts not only at the High Holidays, but also throughout the year. A critical part of what keeps our doors open is giving from members and friends who believe in our community and sustain it with their gifts of time and money. Funds raised for Open Door help cover the costs of our High Holiday services.

To make a donation online: <https://jcamherst.org/payments-and-donations/donations> or send your check made out to "JCA" with Open Door in the memo line to the JCA Office.

Please include your name, address, phone, and email with your check. Thank you.

## YOM KIPPUR YIZKOR (MEMORIAL) BOOKLET

As a member of our community, you are invited to submit the name(s) of deceased loved ones for inclusion in the Yom Kippur Yizkor service. Each year, we generate a new list. Even if a name has been included in previous years, you must resubmit the information. All names will be listed in the memorial booklet, which this year will be accessible on our website.

Please note the date of death (month and year) if the person to be remembered passed away in the Jewish year 5780. Only the names of those who passed away in 5780 will be read aloud at the Yizkor service that takes place after the Torah is read.

It is customary to offer a tzedakah donation in memory of those persons whose names are listed. We suggest a donation of \$18 for a listing. However, all names are welcome as part of our community's Yizkor service, whether or not a donation has been made.

You may make your donation online at our website at <https://jcamherst.org/payments-and-donations/donations>. Please be sure to choose "Yom Kippur Yizkor Booklet" as your designation in the pull-down menu of choices. You may also send a check to the JCA at 742 Main Street, Amherst MA 01002 made out to "JCA" with Yizkor in the memo line.

**To submit names for inclusion in the Yizkor Booklet, please send the following information by Monday, September 21 to [jcayizkor@gmail.com](mailto:jcayizkor@gmail.com)**

- YOUR NAME + PHONE + EMAIL
- PERSON(S) TO BE REMEMBERED
- RELATIONSHIP TO YOU
- DATE OF DEATH (ONLY IF IN 5780)