

Welcome to
Congregation Beth Ami

High Holiday Services

The Gift of a New Year:
Let's open it together.



*May you and your loved ones be blessed with love,
health and joy throughout this New Year.*

For more information,
contact our office at (707) 360-3000



4676 Mayette Avenue ♦ Santa Rosa, CA 95405

www.BethAmiSR.org

WELCOME TO CONGREGATION BETH AMI'S

DAYS OF AWE!

ב"ד

We're so happy for you to be a part of our Beth Ami congregational family as we approach the coming Jewish New Year 5775.

We're here to provide you with the chance to take time out to reflect on the past year in a unique way; combining ancient traditions and modern perspectives; melodies: new and familiar; above all, the chance to "reconnect" with your Jewish Soul.

Perhaps this is your first time; perhaps it's part of your family's tradition; perhaps you simply decided to stop back after a hiatus of one or more years; we want you to be at home!

Our Tradition can help us sense that every single moment is an opportunity and every day is a gift.

וביתכת הבוט הנשל

LeShanah tovah tikateivu!

May you and all those you hold close be written in the Book of Life for a good and sweet year!

Thank you!

Mordecai Miller
Rabbi

Laura Alexander
President

Carolyn Metz
Executive Director

COME HOME FOR THE HOLIDAYS

IN A TIME FOR OPENING OUR HEARTS, WE'RE OPENING OUR DOORS AS WELL.

CONGREGATION BETH AMI WARMLY WELCOMES ALL VISITORS AND NON-MEMBERS.

WE PROVIDE COMPLIMENTARY TICKETS TO OUR HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES.

PLEASE CALL THE OFFICE BY FOR COMPLIMENTARY AND ADDITIONAL TICKETS.

DONATIONS ARE GRATEFULLY ACCEPTED.

(707) 360-3000

SERVICES LED BY RABBI MORDECAI MILLER AND CANTOR Yael KRIEGER

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DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

SELICHOT

SATURDAY, SEPT 20

The official beginning of the Season of Self-examination: we gather as a community late at night to look into our hearts; to study, to visit and to pray. Do we have the courage to admit our errors and to seek forgiveness?

SHOFAR CLASS (2 OFFERED)

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 14 & SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 21



Learn how to blow the Shofar for the High Holy Days: children & adults welcome. Bring a Shofar if you have one.

Rosh Hashanah

Wednesday September 24 - Thursday, September - 25



The “**beginning (head) of the year**” commemorates the creation of Adam and Eve, the first humans, and so, becomes the appropriate time for serious contemplation. Rosh Hashanah is known in the Torah as “Day of Remembrance” (Yom haZikaron) and “Day of Shofar Blasts” (Yom T’ru-ah). “Remembrance” has to do with the Creator “judging” the universe individually and collectively. The shofar blasts are the medium through which our thoughts and emotions transcend words.

Children & Family Services allows families with children ages 2 – 6 and 7 -12 the opportunity to celebrate the holidays together.

Tashlich, “to cast,” is based on verses which speak of “God *casting* our sins into the depths of the sea.” (Micah 7: 18 ff.) It is customary to go to a flowing body of water and to recite prayers while “casting” our sins (represented by bread crumbs) into the water. We will join Congregation Shomrei Torah at Lake Ralphine to symbolically express our desire to be free from sin and forgiven for past misdeeds. Please bring a dairy-veggie potluck to enjoy together with other families.

Mincha & Ma’ariv are afternoon and evening prayer services. Taking about fifteen minutes apiece, they provide further opportunity to meditate of the great themes of the day. What does it mean to acknowledge the Divine as “Sovereign”?

ROSH HASHANAH SECOND DAY

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26

The **Second Day** is a little more relaxed in the Beth Ami Sanctuary. Since we are now more familiar with the flow of the service, it actually allows us to discover elements and moments of meditation and prayer that may elude us on the First Day. The Torah reading recounts the dramatic story of the “Binding of Isaac”, while the Haftarah (Prophetic Reading) taken from Jeremiah, is one of the most deeply moving statements of how much God is aware of the troubles of the Jewish People.

SHABBAT T'SHUVAH**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 26 - SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 27**

The **Shabbat** that falls between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur: named after the opening words of the Prophetic reading (Hosea 14:2-4) "(Shuvah) Return, O Israel, to the Lord your God..." Are we willing to take an honest look at the consequences of our past behavior... and connect the dots?

FAST OF GEDALIAH**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28**

The **Fast of Gedaliah** (Dawn to Evening) is a day set aside to commemorate the assassination of Gedaliah, the Babylonian-appointed official charged with administering the Jewish population remaining in Judah following the destruction of the Temple and exile in 586 B. C. E. Gedaliah was an Israelite and was assassinated by Israelite zealots. This act of defiance caused the Babylonians to remove any vestige of Israelite sovereignty over the land of Judah.

KEVER AVOT & GENIZAH- CEMETERY VISIT**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 28**

The **Kever Avot** ceremony honors those who have passed and supports those who mourn. It allows us to experience the High Holyday season connected to previous generations. Adults and children are welcome to learn and be comforted as we prepare for a fuller experience of the Day of Atonement.

Genizah, "hidden away:" Sacred Hebrew texts accumulated over the past year will be buried with love and respect. We learn cemetery etiquette and come to see the lives of those who have gone before us as beautiful and as holy as the Torah text. Please bring any sacred texts for burial to the synagogue office by September 24.

YOM KIPPUR**FRIDAY, OCTOBER 3 - SATURDAY, OCTOBER 4**

KOL NIDRE: This solemn time begins with an "Earthly Court" absolving all participating of the sin of making a false oath. How often do we make commitments to others - or ourselves- and subsequently forget having made them? Our Tradition considers us as good as our word. "Kol Nidre" provides a time to reflect on this very human frailty.

YOM KIPPUR: The "Day of Atonement," is a day on which we atone for sins committed against G-d or our fellow human beings. To atone before G-d for misdeeds against another person, one must seek reconciliation with that person, righting the wrong whenever possible. To demonstrate our sincerity we "afflict our souls" by fasting from food and drink. The Talmud restrictions include: no washing, bathing, anointing one's body, shaving, etc, wearing leather shoes, or engaging in sexual activities.

Morning Service: An essential part of the service allows us to participate in public confession. The words in our prayer book (*Machzor*) are intended to help us remember specific moments during the past year/s in which we have failed to remember that we are “created in God’s image”. Asking God to forgive us and being reassured that we can be forgiven, can allow us a fresh approach to the future and heal emotionally and spiritually.

Kohen Gadol Service: There are certain services that are only performed on Yom Kippur. One such service is the Ritual of the High Priest (*Kohen Gadol*). This takes us through the various rituals that the High Priest performed on Yom Kippur in the Temple in Jerusalem. There are three points in this service where we have the opportunity to prostrate ourselves out of a sense of submission to the Divine and a physical act of awe and humility. The service reminds us that Life has elements that go beyond our abilities to provide rational explanations. There are elements to the process of forgiveness that may be ineffable.

Eyleh Ezerah, “THESE I REMEMBER:” Perhaps one of the most deeply moving parts of the Yom Kippur liturgy is the Eyleh Ezkerah. This is a martyrology which brings to light the various times in our history - from early ages and down to our times - when members of our people gave up their lives to express their belief in God and their commitment to Torah. It provides us with the realization that, at times, expressing our beliefs and values have come at a great price. Sadly, our own times appear to hang in the balance.

Community Conversation: Community Conversations occur during the afternoon break of the Yom Kippur services. These conversations have given people a chance to personally connect with other members of the Beth Ami Community. The subject for this year’s conversation is, “Building a secure House by strengthening our Relationships.”

Teen T’Shuvah Service: Rick Concoff leads this alternative service for teens (8th grade and up).

Mincha, Torah Service & Yizkor: As the day progresses, the mood shifts; a certain degree of inner-calm becomes perceptible. There’s a “lighter touch” to the proceedings. The Haftarah comprises the Book of Jonah - a dramatic narrative that contrasts G-d’s capacity to forgive and the brittleness of the human spirit over “small stuff”. Do “our possessions” matter more than “people”?

Yizkor allows the chance to focus on the impact that others have on our own lives - despite the fact that they may no longer be physically present. Can we recognize the degree to which we are inter-dependent and how that may impact our choices?

Neilah, ‘Locking the “Gates,” takes place at the time when the city gates would be locked for the night. While it marks the final moments of Yom Kippur, it reminds us that we “don’t have all the time in the world” to redirect our life choices and mend our broken relationships. As Yom Kippur comes to a close and our future is being sealed, we turn to G-d to accept our sincere repentance and ask to be *sealed* in the Book of Life. We pray that the Eternal One judge our thoughts and actions favorably and grant us a New Year filled with health and joy, prosperity and peace.

Ma’ariv & Shofar Blowing: Evening prayer service and final moment of Yom Kippur: Sealing the Book of Life for 5775.

Breaking the Fast: Please join us after services for to break the fast with our community and feast on traditional foods, Reservations are required by September 29. No one will be turned away for lack of funds. Please see Reservation page included with this packet.

SUKKOT**WEDNESDAY, OCTOBER 8 – FRIDAY OCTOBER 17**

Sukkot (booths) is a joyous holiday that celebrates the harvest in the land of Israel. It is a pilgrimage festival, when ancient Israelites traveled to the Temple in Jerusalem with gifts of the first fruits and offerings to G-d. The Sukkah is a temporary shelter and symbolizes the idea that our true and ultimate protection comes from G-d. According to the Torah we are commanded to “dwell” in it for seven days and no more. One interpretation of “dwelling” is “eating meals”. Today, Sukkot resembles Thanksgiving as a festival where we thank G-d for the blessings of the harvest. It is a time for sharing and hospitality and inviting people to join us for a meal in our Sukkah. Join Rabbi Miller and his family in his Sukkah at home on October 12

**SHEMINI ATZERET -SIMCHAT TORAH****WEDNESDAY, OCT 15 - FRIDAY, OCT 17**

Shemini Atzeret is the last day of the Festival Season. While it comes at the end of Sukkot, it is a separate holiday. The rabbi’s interpreted its significance as the party after the party; an indication that G-d “did not want to part” with the Israelites when they had to return home after all the other holidays. There is a custom to say the Yizkor prayers on this festival, too.

Simchat Torah, “Rejoicing with the Torah,” falls on the second day of Shemini Atzeret! It is filled with joy and love for G-d, the Torah, and the Jewish community. It marks the completion of the yearlong cycle of weekly Torah readings. Everyone is called up to receive an *Aliyah* and there is a special honor to be given the person who is called up for the very last Aliyah over the Torah (Chatan/Kallat Torah) and the person who is called up for the very first in the new cycle (Chatan/Kallat Bereishit).

