

Welcome to

High Holiday Services

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



*Welcome to Congregation Beth Ami's Days of Awe,
Services led by Rabbi Mordecai Miller, Cantor Jessie Leider, and
members of our congregation*

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



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DESCRIPTION OF ACTIVITIES

SELICHOT

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 9

The official beginning of the Season of Self-examination: We gather as a community 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?

EREV ROSH HASHANAH

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 15

Join us to step outside your daily routine and embrace the New Year in community.

ROSH HASHANAH FIRST DAY

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 16



The “**beginning (head) of the year**” commemorates the creation of Adam and Eve, the first humans, so it is an appropriate time for serious contemplation. Rosh Hashanah is known in the Torah as the “Day of Remembrance” (Yom haZikaron) and the “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’s Services gives families with children up to 6 years old the opportunity to celebrate the holidays together at Beth Ami, which allows us to provide age-appropriate activities for both parents and children. Please bring a blanket to sit on. An age-appropriate snack will be served. Service will be led by Lauren Kalmanson. RSVPs are appreciated but walk ins are always welcome.

Shabbat Lunch following services (approx. 1:00 p.m.) Please join us for a kosher dairy lunch, no charge, however donations are appreciated (*please don’t bring money on Shabbat*).

Mincha & Ma’ariv are afternoon and evening prayer services held outdoors at the park. Each taking about fifteen minutes, they provide further opportunity to meditate on the great themes of the day. *What does it mean to acknowledge the Divine as “Sovereign”?*

ROSH HASHANAH SECOND DAY

SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 17

The **Second Day** is a little more relaxed. 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 G-d’s compassion for the Jewish people.

Tashlich, “to cast,” is based on verses that speak of “G-d *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 bird feed) into the water. We will meet at Lake Ralphine to symbolically express our desire to be free from sin and forgiven for past misdeeds. We will do Mincha services by the lake following Tashlich and then come back to Beth Ami for a picnic and Ma’ariv/Havdalah services (See insert: “Tashlich Service & Picnic”)

FAST OF GEDALIAH**MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 18**

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 BCE. Gedaliah was an Israelite who was assassinated by Israelite zealots. This act of defiance caused the Babylonians to remove any vestige of Israelite sovereignty over the land of Judah.

SHABBAT SHUVAH**FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 22– SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 23**

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 G-d...” Are we willing to take an honest look at the consequences of our past behavior... and connect the dots?

KEVER AVOT & GENIZAH - CEMETERY VISIT**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24**

The **Kever Avot** ceremony honors those who have passed and supports those who mourn. It allows us to experience the High Holiday season connected to previous generations. Adults and children are welcome to learn and be comforted as we prepare for a fuller experience on 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 Friday, September 22 before 2:00 p.m.**

YOM KIPPUR**SUNDAY, SEPTEMBER 24 – MONDAY, SEPTEMBER 25**

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 our need to be 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: washing, bathing, anointing one's body, shaving, etc., wearing leather shoes, or engaging in sexual activities.

Note: On Yom Kippur, bottles of water, for emergency only, are located in each restroom.

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 when we failed to remember that we are “created in G-d’s image”. Asking G-d to forgive us and being reassured that we can be forgiven allow us a fresh approach to the future and heal emotionally and spiritually.

Kohen Gadol Service: There are certain services that are performed only 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.

Children's Services: In lieu of children's services, families are warmly welcomed to join the main service in the Friedman Center for Yom Kippur.

Teen T'Shuvah Service: Rick Concoff leads this alternative service for teens (7th grade and up) on the lawn. For more information, contact Rick at concoff@yahoo.com or (707) 477-9196

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 interdependent and how that may impact our choices?

Eyleh Ezkerah, "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 G-d and their commitment to Torah. It provides us with the realization that, at times, expressing our beliefs and values comes at a great price. Sadly, our own times appear to hang in the balance.

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 for the Eternal One to 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 the final moment of Yom Kippur: Sealing the Book of Life for 5784. All are invited with their personal shofars to help us end the holiday with the final shofar blow after the end of the Ma'ariv service.

Breaking the Fast: We will have a simple Break Fast meal to ease you out of the fast. Eat in or takeout. Please see the Order Form included with this packet. **RSVP by Sept. 18th.**

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.

SUKKOT LULAV & ETROG



If the High Holidays are coming, then Sukkot can't be far behind. That means it's time to order your Lulav and Etrog. *What's that?* It's a citron and palm/myrtle/willow combination that we use each day of the holiday to celebrate the harvest. *Why should I have one?* They are an integral part of the synagogue service (except on Shabbat). They smell good, look funky, sound neat when shaken, and signify much that edifies us. In addition, they make for a tangible and memorable holiday practice: Once you've held one you'll never forget it, and you'll look forward to Sukkot all year. Your Lulav and

Etrog will be available for pick up at Beth Ami fully assembled, with an explanation of how to use them, what the significance is, and transliterated blessings.



Shemini Atzeret is the last day of the Festival Season. While it comes at the end of Sukkot, it is a separate holiday. The rabbis 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 also a custom to say the Yizkor memorial prayers on this festival.

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.

FEEDING THE HUNGRY



To give greater meaning to our voluntary fast and to

help end the involuntary fast of those who are poor and hungry, we ask that you contribute to Mazon, a Jewish Response to Hunger, the amount you would have spent to feed yourself and your family on Yom Kippur. Those dollars received from thousands in our Jewish community will, in turn, bring decency and sustenance to thousands in need of help.

Malk Fund

Another vehicle to help our community and Sonoma County is **the Malk Food and Shelter Fund**. Everett (Z'I) and Phyllis Shapiro generously created this fund in memory of Phyllis' father, mother, and sister. Its purpose is to provide food, shelter, and clothing for those in need in the Sonoma County Jewish Community.

Redwood Empire Food Bank

Each year Congregants are encouraged to make donations of non-perishable food to help meet the needs in our **local community**. This year's donations to **Redwood Empire Food Bank** will help stock the shelves of needy families and children here in Sonoma County.

Fill up a grocery bag and return it with healthy, non-perishable foods on Kol Nidre. Please be mindful to bring items low in sodium and sugar; canned tuna & chicken, peanut butter, energy bars, tea, pasta, cereal, canned soup, toiletries, and single-wrapped rolls of toilet paper are always needed.

Now and throughout the year, remember that giving Tzedakah (Charity) helps others while improving ourselves. Join with many of us when you bring back your bag of food, contribute to Mazon and support the Malk Fund. Thank you!