



Rosh Hodesh Elul

Sunday, August 24, 2025 @ 11:00 am

Program Facilitator: Bonnie Silverman

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Introductions and Opening Blessing

Introduce yourself! We invite you to use your first name and your mother's first name. It doesn't matter if your mother isn't/wasn't Jewish.

Blessings:

Commentary by LilyFish Gomberg:

The reference to children in the blessing can apply to biological or adopted children, and it can also apply to anyone we nurture and teach within the community, the next generation of Jews we collectively hope to inspire.

The prayer is intended to be inclusive, speaking to our shared responsibility in helping to shape the future of the Jewish community.

In Sanhedrin 99b, Reish Lakish says, "Anyone who teaches someone else's child Torah is regarded by the Torah as though they have made them." R. Elazar adds that it is as though the teacher has "made" the child in terms of Torah, highlighting the importance of the role of teaching and mentorship in Jewish life.

May it be Your will, my God and God of my ancestors, to be gracious to me and to all my family and to give us, and all Israel, a good and long life. Remember us with goodness and blessing, and grant us salvation and mercy. Grant us abundant blessing, and fortify the places we call home. May Your Presence dwell among us as we gather here today. May we be blessed with wise and learned disciples and children, lovers of God who stand in awe of You, people who speak truth and spread holiness. May those we nurture light the world with Torah and good deeds.

Hear the prayers I utter now in the name of our mothers Sarah, Rebekah, Rachel, Leah, Bilhah and Zilpah. May Your light, reflected in these candles, surround us always. And let us say, Amen.

*Barukh atah Adonai
Eloheinu melekh ha'olam
shehechyanu vekiyemanu
vehigi'anu lazman hazeh*

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי
אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם
שֶׁהַחַיִּים וְקִיְמָנוּ
וְהַגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנֵי הַזֶּה

Blessed are you, Adonai, our God, sovereign of the universe
who has kept us alive, sustained us, and enabled us to reach this season

About Elul

Elul is the month of contemplation, where we greet ourselves in the mirror and see where we have fallen short of being our best, asking for forgiveness.

Excerpts Source: *Preparing Your Heart for the High Holidays* Lent by Donna Tartasky

While the High Holidays fall on the 1st and 2nd day of Tishrei, we start the preparation during the prior month of Elul when we begin a period of self-reflection, and a process of T'shuvah or repentance. T'shuvah, meaning to return or come back, is most often defined as repentance. The concept is that everybody sins and that we can stop or minimize those occasions and the effects that those actions will have in the future by repenting for past transgressions. The period of T'shuvah, to return to the state of perfection on Rosh Hashanah, begins on the 1st day of Elul and continues through the 10-day period following Rosh Hashanah until Yom Kippur, the day of atonement.

The concept of "returning or coming back", means coming back to ourselves and our clean and unadulterated state, going back in time to fix the actions and causes that gave rise to the negative energy in our lives. We have a chance during the period of T'shuvah to rewind our movie from the past year to meditate and inject light into prior dark moments of anger, judgment or jealousy and take the power back from the negative energy we created. Tradition says that God judges us on Rosh Hashanah for our prior deeds and the day is also known as the "Day of Judgment." However, by using specific spiritual tools, we can prepare our vessel, eliminate any pending judgment and ask the creator to help us receive the totality of light on the holiday. Repentance involves acknowledging wrongdoing, feeling regret, and making a conscious effort to change one's behavior and avoid repeating past mistakes. T'shuvah is a key component of atonement, allowing individuals to repair damaged relationships with God and others. The process of T'shuvah typically involves four stages: regret, ceasing the harmful action, confession and restitution (if possible), and resolution to not repeat the sin.

T'shuvah is not solely about feeling guilty. It is a positive process of self-transformation and spiritual growth. The concept of T'shuvah is a continuous theme in Judaism, emphasizing the possibility of change and renewal. T'shuvah is a return to a state of spiritual purity, a return to one's covenantal commitments with God, and a return to the correct path. During the year, each of us makes vows to do things which are not fulfilled. When we make a vow to do something, our words have energy and create an opening for that which we pledged — setting in motion a process for the pledge to take place. A vow can take the form of setting a meeting with a colleague, committing to call a friend or making a pledge to give money. The importance of keeping a vow is so important to the Hasidic practice, prior to Erev Rosh Hashanah, one stands in front of a tribunal of 3 men (we, of course include women) that act as a spiritual court and we ask that our previously unfulfilled vows be released and annulled.

Excerpts Source: Chabad.org



התרת נדרים

Hatarat Nedarim: The Release of Vows

by Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi
Co-Founder ALEPH Alliance for Jewish Renewal

Almost everyone who is Jewish knows that Kol Nidre is about releasing vows and has participated in the ceremony. Few know the parallel ritual done in small groups before Rosh Hashanah. Traditionally, right before Rosh Hashanah one performs this simple ritual with three friends, each in turn becoming the petitioner, while the other three act as the beit din, the judges in a court. The ritual is a wonderful way to enter the holidays as well as to prepare oneself for what will happen on Yom Kippur.

Discussion

Using the above example, break into groups of 4 and take turns. One person is petitioner, the other 3 are the judges. You may petition for one or more below, or of your own choosing.

Examples:

1. A vow that you promised but did not fulfill
2. An omission, a moment of regret, that you would like to transform into spiritual growth
3. A moment of darkness in which you can imagine seeing a ray of light by repenting to yourself, to God, or to another.
4. When beating our chests, ie: Any of the confessions: We have abused, we have betrayed, we have been cruel, we have destroyed and embittered other people's lives, we have yielded to wrong desires, we have slandered, etc (see next page for full Ashamnu).
5. Your own choice

Ashamnu

אֲשַׁמְנוּ

<i>Ashamnu</i>	We have trespassed;	אֲשַׁמְנוּ
<i>Bagadnu</i>	we have dealt treacherously;	בִּגְדָנוּ
<i>Gazalnu</i>	we have robbed;	גָּזַלְנוּ
<i>Dibarnu dofi</i>	we have spoken slander;	דִּבְרָנוּ דְּפִי
<i>He'evinu</i>	we have acted perversely;	הֶעָוִינוּ
<i>Vehirsha'nu</i>	we have done wrong;	וְהִרְשַׁעְנוּ
<i>Zadnu</i>	we have acted presumptuously;	זָדְנוּ
<i>Hamasnu</i>	we have done violence;	חָמַסְנוּ
<i>Tafalnu sheker</i>	we have practiced deceit;	טַפְּלָנוּ שְׁקֵר
<i>Ya'atsnu ra</i>	we have counseled evil;	יַעֲצָנוּ רָע
<i>Kizavnu</i>	we have spoken falsehood;	כִּזְבָּנוּ
<i>Latznu</i>	we have scoffed;	לָצְנוּ
<i>Maradnu</i>	we have revolted;	מָרְדְנוּ
<i>Ni'atznu</i>	we have blasphemed;	נִאֲצָנוּ
<i>Sararnu</i>	we have rebelled;	סָרְרָנוּ
<i>Avinu</i>	we have committed iniquity;	עָוִינוּ
<i>Pasha'nu</i>	we have transgressed;	פָּשַׁעְנוּ
<i>Tzararnu</i>	we have oppressed;	צָרְרָנוּ
<i>Kishinu oref</i>	we have been stiff-necked;	קִשִּׁינוּ עֵרֶף
<i>Rasha'nu</i>	we have acted wickedly;	רָשַׁעְנוּ
<i>Shihatnu</i>	we have dealt corruptly;	שָׁחַתְנוּ
<i>Ti'avnu</i>	we have committed abomination;	תַּעֲבָנוּ
<i>Ta'inu</i>	we have gone astray;	תַּעֲיָנוּ
<i>Ti'ta'nu</i>	we have led others astray.	תַּעֲתַעְנוּ

High Holidays 5786: Schedule of Programs

Yamim Nora'im: Days of Awe

Monday, September 22

6:00 pm — Erev Rosh Hashanah Service
7:15 pm — Erev Rosh Hashanah Oneg Dinner

Tuesday, September 23

9:00 am — Rosh Hashanah Day I Service
9:30 am — Rosh Hashanah Family Service for Families with Children Ages 7 and Younger*
10:30 am — Rosh Hashanah Family Service for Families with Children Ages 8-12*
10:30 am — Rosh Hashanah Teen Program*
1:15 pm — Rosh Hashanah Day I Kiddush Lunch
2:30 pm — Community Tashlikh

Wednesday, September 24

9:30 am — Rosh Hashanah Day II Service
1:00 pm — Rosh Hashanah Day II Kiddush Lunch

Friday, September 26

6:00 pm — TGIShabbat Shuvah Service
7:15 pm — Oneg Dinner

Saturday, September 27

9:45 am — Shabbat Shuvah Service and Torah Discussion
12:00 pm — Kiddush Lunch

Wednesday, October 1

6:15 pm — Kol Nidrei Service

Thursday, October 2

9:00 am — Yom Kippur Morning Service
9:30 am — Yom Kippur Family Service for Families with Children Ages 7 and Younger*
10:30 am — Yom Kippur Family Service for Families with Children Ages 8-12*
10:30 am — Yom Kippur Teen Program*
4:45 pm — Yom Kippur Yizkor Service
5:15 pm — Yom Kippur Minhah Service
6:15 pm — Yom Kippur Ne'ilah Service
7:21 pm — Yom Kippur Break the Fast

* Program requires advance registration for both members and the general public

Sukkot and Simhat Torah

Sunday, October 5

10:00 am — Sukkah Building and Decoration

Tuesday, October 7

9:30 am — Sukkot Morning Service
12:00 pm — Sukkot Kiddush Lunch

Friday, October 10

5:30 pm — Shabbat Schmooze
6:00 pm — TGIShabbat in the Sukkah and Oneg Dinner

Tuesday, October 14

9:30 am — Sh'mini Atzeret Morning Service with Yizkor
12:00 pm — Sh'mini Atzeret Kiddush Lunch
5:30 pm — Simhat Torah Dinner
6:15 pm — Simhat Torah Service

Friday, October 17

5:30 pm — Shabbat Schmooze
6:00 pm — TGIShabbat Service, with Hatan Torah and Kallat Bereshit speeches at Oneg dinner



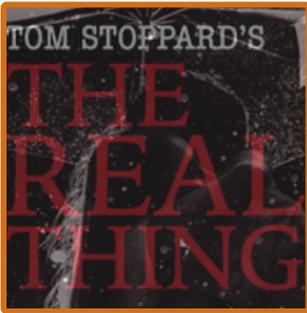


Book Club: *The Wolf Hunt* by Ayelet Gundar-Goshen

Friday, Sep. 12 @ 10:30 am

Our congregation's Book Club features great conversations about a variety of Jewish-themed books in the comfort of the Beit Midrash. Good company, coffee, and pastries are always guaranteed! This month's book is *The Wolf Hunt* by Ayelet Gundar-Goshen.

bookclub@societyhillsynagogue.org



Triple Chai (54+): Lunch and *The Real Thing* at the Lantern Theatre

Sunday, Sep. 14 @ 2:00 pm

\$43 with group discount code

Lantern Theater Company (St. Stephen's Theater, 923 Ludlow Street)

Join Triple Chai for an afternoon at the Lantern Theater to see Tom Stoppard's acclaimed romantic comedy, *The Real Thing*.

This witty, layered play follows a playwright navigating love, fidelity, and the blurred lines between art and life — with sharp humor, moving honesty, and clever "plays within a play."

societyhillsynagogue.org/triple-chai



Society Hill Synagogue *On the Move*: Apple Picking at Linvilla

Sunday, Sep. 14 @ 11:00 am

Linvilla Orchards (37 Knowlton Rd., Media)

\$11 per person

As part of our Hebrew School's new initiative to take Society Hill Synagogue *on the move*, we're headed to Linvilla Orchards for apple picking! Join us to connect with the earth — and each other — as we gather apples to enjoy on

Rosh Hashanah. If cost is a barrier, please don't hesitate to reach out. You are invited regardless of whether you have a child in Hebrew School, and we can't wait to see you there! **RSVP by Monday, September 8.**

societyhillsynagogue.org/linvilla-sep14



BREAD: A Case Study in Jewish Folk Practice, Magic, and Superstition

Sep. 16 and Oct. 27

How did the braided bread that we now call challah end up on our Shabbat tables? Why do we break off pieces of bread into a flowing body of water during Rosh Hashanah?

Join rebbetzin **Caroline Kamesar** for a hands-on workshop series as we discover some of the ways in which folk practice, magic, and superstition are alive and well in modern Jewish practice.

societyhillsynagogue.org/bread-workshop