

HIGH HOLIDAYS: The Holiest Time of the Year

Fall is an important time in the Jewish year as includes several major holidays. The first two of these "High Holidays" are called *Rosh Hashanah* (*Rohsh Ha-Sha-Nah*) and *Yom Kippur* (*Yome Key-Poor*). They are 10 days apart from each other.

Rosh Hashanah

Rosh Hashanah, which translates literally to "head of the year," is a two-day celebration of the Jewish new year. This year, **Rosh Hashanah begins at sundown on September 15 and ends the night of September 17**. Depending on their religious observance or upbringing, some Jews celebrate only the first day of Rosh Hashanah.

To arrange for live-streamed or in-person High Holiday services, please contact Rabbi Ami as quickly as possible: 518-516-1116 or amonson@jfsnyny.org.

Yom Kippur

While Rosh Hashanah is a celebratory holiday, Yom Kippur is a very solemn one. Known as the *Day of Atonement*, it is a time to repent for one's sins and doing better in the new year. It is customary to fast for the whole day, **from sundown on September 24 to after sundown on the 25th in 2023**. It begins with a special prayer service called **Kol Nidre** (*Kohl Nee-dray*). Yom Kippur is considered the holiest day on the Jewish calendar.

The Ten Days of Repentance

The 10 days between the two holidays are a time for self reflection and collection of thoughts before the Yom Kippur fast. Residents may seem more introspective during this time.

Helping Your Jewish Residents Celebrate the High Holidays

For the Jewish month of *Tishrei*, which begins on Rosh Hashanah, it is traditional to listen to the blasts of the *shofar*, a ram's horn that is used like a trumpet. The act of hearing the shofar on the two High Holidays is considered a great *mitzvah* (*Mitz-Vah*), or holy commandment. If you would like to arrange a shofar blowing for your residents, contact Rabbi Ami at amonson@jfsnyny.org.

Rosh Hashanah is marked by saying special prayers that ask for God to write our names into "the Book of Life" for another year. A great feast with symbolic

foods is consumed on either or both nights of the holiday. There are also special sayings (*page 2*) and songs (*page 6*) that will make your residents feel at home during this season.

The most significant part of Yom Kippur is the 25-hour fast. While fasting may be very important to your residents, **it is an essential law that no one should fast if it will interfere with their health.**

Arranging a symbolic fast (fasting for a few hours, not eating sweets, etc.) may help your resident feel more involved in the holiday.



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Important Terms for the High Holidays

Hebrew...	It is pronounced...	It means...	When it is said...
Chag sameach	Hag-som-ay-akh	Happy holidays!	Any holiday except for Yom Kippur
Shanah tovah	Sha-nah toe-vah	Happy New Year!	Any time during the High Holidays (see pg. 8)
Shanah tovah u'metukah	Shon-nah toe-vah ooh meh-too-kah	Have a sweet and happy new year	On Rosh Hashanah and the 10 Days
G'mar chatimah tovah or G'mar Tov	g-mar ha-ti-mah toh-vah or G-mar tov	May you be sealed in the Book of Life or	Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur
Machzor	Mach-zore	Prayer book specific to the high holidays	A resident may say, "I want to use my machzor to pray."

Traditional High Holidays Foods and What They Symbolize

Like most major Jewish holidays, there is an array of foods that symbolize a wish or blessing for prosperity and health in the coming new year. Since Jews come from all different parts of the world, residents may have meal traditions that are unique to their family, (*see Bubbe's Corner on page 4 for more*). Here are some of the most common traditional foods and their symbolic meanings.

APPLES & HONEY

Sliced apples dipped in honey is the most popular Rosh Hashanah custom. This combination represents our hopes for a sweet new year. We also prepare foods with apples and honey, like apple kugel (noodle pudding), honey cake, apple cake and applesauce.



NEW FRUIT & POMEGRANATE



In order to celebrate the novelty of the new year, many people will try a new or seasonal fruit like a star or dragon fruit. The fruit symbolizes gratefulness for being alive and allowing us to taste all the fruit the world has to offer. The pomegranate is a popular fruit in Judaism because their many seeds are symbolic of the 613 commandments in the Torah.

ROUND CHALLAH

Jews eat braided challah bread all year round, but at Rosh Hashanah, they opt for a challah that is braided into a circle rather than a loaf. This represents the cyclical nature of the year. The challah is often dipped in honey.



More Holidays...



Sukkot (*Soo-coat*) begins on a full moon at nightfall on the 15th of the Jewish lunar month of Tishrei (*Tish-ray*) — this year Friday, September 29 to Saturday, October 6, 2023.

During Sukkot, Jews build a *sukkah* — a structure that has a cover made from greenery harvested from the ground. The sukkah is meant to become a second home during the holiday. Jew traditionally eat meals, study, schmooze and some even sleep in the sukkah, where only the light greenery separates us from the sky.



Each day of Sukkot (except for Shabbat), blessings are made with a *lulav and etrog* (see left). A lulav is a bundle of specified green and an etrog is a citron. If you are looking for these for your facility, please contact Rabbi Ami at JFS: (518) 516-1116 or amonson@jfsnyny.org.



After Sukkot is ***Shemini Atzeret*** which means "the eighth [day] of retention." The second day of Shemini Atzeret is called ***Simchat Torah***. On this day, Jews conclude, and begin again the annual Torah (bible) reading cycle. The event is marked with great rejoicing.

Programs and Activities for Residents During the High Holidays

CAST AWAY YOUR SINS

On the afternoon on Rosh Hashanah there is a ceremony called *Tashlich*, which is performed by "casting off" or throwing crumbs of food, usually bread, into a body of flowing water such as a lake or pond. This symbolizes casting away sins from the previous year and starting anew. **Take your residents to a nearby pond or fountain and give them stale bread to participate in Tashlich.**

HAVE A BREAK-FAST

Though many of your residents probably will not be able to truly fast on Yom Kippur, breaking the ceremonial fast with a meal at the end of the day commemorates the end of the holiday. **After sundown, prepare a spread with classic and easily digested Jewish foods like bagels, tuna fish, egg salad and grape juice.**

LIGHT A MEMORIAL CANDLE

Yom Kippur is both a day to atone and a day to commemorate the loss of loved ones. Jew traditionally light small candles called *Yahrtzeit* (*yardz-zite*) candles on sad days such as death anniversaries and solemn holidays. The candles burn for a full 24 hours. **Electronic yahrtzeit candles can be used for safety purposes, and they can be found at most local synagogue gift shops.**



PLAY TRADITIONAL MUSIC

Music is always an engaging way to set the tone for the holiday. **See pages 6 & 7 for sheet music of a popular Rosh Hashanah tune.**

Bubbe's Corner

You can always count on Bubbe (Yiddish for "grandmother") for her wisdom and stories. Today Bubbe Sarah shares some fun stories about preparing for the High Holidays. Every Jewish community and family has its own High Holiday traditions unique to their lives and experiences. Be sure to ask your residents about what special things their families do to celebrate, and try to make them feel as at home as possible!

Traditionally, people break the fast at the end of Yom Kippur with eggs, bagels, lox, cream cheese, fruit or white fish salad.

During Sukkot, it is customary for kids to sleep in their sukkah (temporary huts) at night.

Israeli and Persian Jews eat a variety of appetizers like leeks, spinach, and peas at their feast.

Every year for the High Holidays, my family would add money to our tzedakah box and pick a charity we want to donate to. **Please consider JFS.** We can only provide services like chaplaincy support through the generosity of our community.

During the High Holidays, families use honey instead of salt to flavor their challah.



Here are Links to 2023 Streaming High Holiday Services

ALBANY

Reform

[Congregation Beth Emeth](#)

[B'nai Sholom Reform](#)

[Congregation](#)

Conservative

[Temple Israel](#)

[Congregation Ohav Shalom](#)

SCHENECTADY/NISKAYUNA

Reform

[Congregation Gates of Heaven](#)

Conservative

[Congregation Agudat Achim](#)

TROY

Reform

[Congregation Berith Shalom](#)

Conservative

[Temple Beth El of Troy](#)

SARATOGA COUNTY

Reform

[Temple Sinai](#)

Conservative

[Congregation Beth Shalom
of Clifton Park](#)

Call (518) 371-0608 for
Zoom link

[Congregation Shaara Tfilie of
Saratoga Springs](#)

Call (518) 584-2370 for Zoom links.

COLUMBIA & GREENE COUNTIES

Reform

[Temple Israel of Catskill](#)

Conservative

[Anshei Emeth of Hudson](#)

Shana Tovah!



In Memory of Joseph Abell
Avinu Malkeinu
Our Father, Our King

High Holyday liturgy
English Adaptation by
Michael Isaacson

Folk Melody
Arranged by
Michael Isaacson

In two ♩ = 64

mp

A - vi - nu Mal-kei - nu _____ cha -

mp

nei - nu v' - a - nei - nu. _____ A - vi - nu mal - kei - nu cha - nei - nu va - a - nei - nu ki

ein ba - nu ma - a - sim _____ a - sei i - ma - nu _____ ts' -

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In Memory of Joseph Abell
Avinu Malkeinu
Our Father, Our King

High Holyday liturgy
English Adaptation by
Michael Isaacson

Folk Melody
Arranged by
Michael Isaacson

The musical score is written for a vocal part and piano accompaniment. The vocal line is on a single staff with a treble clef, and the piano accompaniment is on two staves (treble and bass clefs) with a grand staff bracket. The key signature has one sharp (F#), and the time signature is 4/4. The lyrics are written below the vocal staff.

da - kah va - che - sed _____ a - sei i - ma - nu ts' -

da - kah va - che - sed v' - ho - shi - ei - nu. _____

Here's How JFS Can Help Your Residents



Transportation with Project 5

JFS staff and volunteer provide private transportation to medical appointments, errands and synagogue services. There is a small fee for this service, but some synagogues underwrite rides. Please inquire.

Senior Resource Network

Specialists in aging provide resources and guidance to help older adults and their families with long-term care planning, caregiver support, and a range of aging related concerns.



Kosher Home Delivered Meals

Volunteers deliver kosher meals to those who cannot cook, shop or safely prepare meals.

Counseling

Professional and compassionate therapists help people of all ages with grief & loss, life transitions, depression, aging related concerns and more.

We accept Medicare and other major insurance plans.



For more information, please contact us: 518-482-8856 | info@jfsneny.org

Jewish Holidays Calendar 2023-2024*

HOLIDAY	DATE
Rosh Hashanah (2 days)	Friday, Sept. 15* – Sunday Sept. 17, 2023
Yom Kippur (1 day)	Sunday, Sept. 24* – Monday, Sept. 25, 2023
Sukkot (7 days)	Friday, Sept. 29* – Friday, Oct. 6, 2023
Shemini Atzeret (1 day) & Simchat Torah (1 day)	Saturday, Oct. 6* – Sunday, Oct. 8, 2023
Hanukkah (8 days)	Thursday, Dec. 7* – Friday, Dec. 15, 2023
Tu B'Shevat (1 day)	Wednesday, Jan. 24* – Thursday, Jan. 25, 2024
Purim (1 day)	Saturday, Mar. 23* – Sunday, Mar. 24, 2024
Passover (8 days)	Monday, Apr. 22* – Tuesday, Apr. 30, 2024
Shavuot (2 days)	Tuesday, Jun. 11* – Thursday, June 13 2024

* All holidays begin at sundown

About JFS

JFS provides support, services and resources for individuals and families of all ages and backgrounds.

Our mission is to enrich the lives of individuals, families, and the community by providing compassionate, collaborative human services, guided by Jewish values.

Our staff has expertise in:

- Helping older adults maintain their safety and independence
- Providing resources and guidance to older adults and their families
- Private transportation to medical appointments and synagogue services
- Counseling and care management (JFS now accepts Medicare.)

Support Our Chaplaincy Program

JFS provides spiritual connection and support for Jewish residents in long-term and elder care in the Capital Region.

This publication and the visits and programs offered by our Community Chaplain, Rabbi Ami Monson, are made possible through donations.

Please consider supporting our Dr. Rela Mintz Geffen Jewish Community Chaplaincy Fund so that we can continue to offer this complimentary service:

Online: jfsneny.org/donations

Call: (518) 516-1102

Thank you!

Chaplaincy Services are a service of Jewish Family Services through a grant from Jewish Federation of NENY in cooperation B'nai B'rith Gideon Foundation, Daughters of Sarah Community for Seniors and Temple Israel.



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Jewish Federation
of Northeastern New York

The Jewish Community
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