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# the Shofar



Etz Chayim Conservative Synagogue's Monthly Newsletter

SEPTEMBER, 2018

ELUL/TISHREI, 5778-5779

Friday evening services begin at 7:30 p.m.  
Saturday morning services begin at 9:30 a.m.

## SCHEDULE OF HIGH HOLIDAY SERVICES

Please see the last page of this publication for detailed information on the upcoming Holiday services.

### RABBI'S MESSAGE

#### YOU'RE BETTER OFF HAVING DROPPED THEM

Rosh Hashanah 5779 begins Sunday evening, September 9, and continues Monday and Tuesday, September 10 and 11. Elsewhere you have the full schedule of services for the festival. I look forward to seeing you in synagogue, and I hope to greet each one of you personally and wish you a shanah tovah.

One of the themes of Rosh Hashanah is remembrance. God remembers all our deeds as He reviews the year gone by. If God is in charge of remembering I want to offer a few words in favor of forgetting. The Torah itself has a commandment in that regard: "When you gather your harvest at the end of the year and you forget a sheaf of wheat, you may not go

back to reclaim it. Rather, you must leave it for the poor." In a sense, it can be a mitzvah to *forget*. The most likely scenario for this is that your hands are already full, and you already have enough, and so it's actually a blessing that you left some sheaves behind. The poor can use it. You don't need it.

Perhaps we can extend the mitzvah in a spiritual way. Do you have regrets that burden your mind? I suggest that it would be a mitzvah to forget them. Leave them in the field, as it were; your arms are already full enough with the issues and the challenges of today. Rosh Hashanah means that however many years we have actually lived, we all are becoming a year older. And so I say that as we harvest our memories from the years gone by, let us forget some past days of sorrow and allow them to blend

with the mulch. If we bear a grudge maybe it's best to let it fall into a gully — for a serious grudge, into a sinkhole — and thus free ourselves to better enjoy our current pleasures.

As one rabbi prayed, “God, help us leave behind the things that weigh us down. Help us not to remember all the worries we hoard. Let us be like that farmer who left the sheaves behind, and having left them, later found that he did not know their number, for they were gone.”

Dear friends, for the new year may we still retain a sharp memory — but may we also be blessed with a useful ‘forgettery.’

Shanah tovah,

Stephen Listfield

## HIGH HOLIDAYS INFORMATION

### Rosh Hashanah

Rosh Hashanah is the festival celebrating the start of the Jewish New Year.

Rosh Hashanah occurs on the first and second days of Tishri. This year the holiday falls on Sunday evening, September 9 and continues until nightfall Tuesday, September 11.

The Jewish New Year is a time for introspection, looking back at the mistakes of the past year and planning the changes to make in the new year. This period of introspection does not end at the conclusion of Rosh HaShanah, but actually stretches for ten days, known

commonly as the Days of Awe, until Yom Kippur.

The name "Rosh Hashanah" is not used in the Bible to discuss this holiday. The Bible refers to the holiday as Yom HaZikaron (the day of remembrance) or Yom T'ruah (the day of the sounding of the shofar). The holiday is instituted in Leviticus 23:24-25.

The shofar is a ram's horn which is blown somewhat like a trumpet. One of the most important observances of this holiday is hearing the sounding of the shofar in the synagogue. There are four different types of shofar notes: tekiah, a sustained note; shevarim, three short notes rising in tone, teruah, a series of nine (or more) short, staccato notes; and tekiah gedolah (literally, "big tekiah"), the final blast in a set, which lasts for an impressive amount of time — especially as blown by Barry Meyer. The Bible gives no specific reason for this practice. Maimonides suggests that the shofar's sound is a call to repentance. The shofar is not blown if the holiday falls on a Sabbath.

No work is permitted on Rosh Hashanah.

A popular observance during this holiday is eating apples dipped in honey, a symbol of our wish for a sweet new year. Another popular practice of the holiday is Tashlikh ("casting off"). We walk to flowing water, such as a creek or river, and empty our pockets, symbolically casting off our sins. This practice is not discussed in the Bible, but is a long-standing custom.

Religious services for the holiday focus on the concept of God's sovereignty.

## Yom Kippur

Yom Kippur is the most important day of the Jewish year. Many Jews who do not observe other Jewish customs will refrain from work, fast and/or attend synagogue services on this day. Yom Kippur occurs on the 10th day of Tishri. The holiday this year falls on Tuesday evening, September 18 and ends at nightfall the next day, September 19.

The name Yom Kippur means Day of Atonement. It is a day set aside to "afflict the soul," to atone for the sins of the past year. However, Yom Kippur atones only for sins between man and God, not for sins against another person. To atone for sins against another person, you must first seek reconciliation with that person, righting the wrongs you committed against them.

No work may be performed on Yom Kippur. Also, you are supposed to refrain from eating and drinking (even water) on Yom Kippur. It is a complete, 25-hour fast beginning before sunset on the evening before Yom Kippur and ending after nightfall on the day of Yom Kippur. The Talmud also specifies additional restrictions that are less well-known: washing and bathing, anointing one's body (with cosmetics, deodorants, etc.), wearing leather shoes, and engaging in sexual relations are all prohibited on Yom Kippur. As always, any of these restrictions can be lifted where a threat to life or health is involved.

Most of the holiday is spent in the synagogue, in prayer. The services end at nightfall, with the blowing of the tekiah gedolah, a long blast on the shofar.

It is customary to wear white on the holiday, which symbolizes purity and calls to mind the promise that our sins shall be made as white as snow (Is. 1:18).

## Sukkot

Sukkot is a seven-day holiday. The two days following the festival - Shemini Atzeret and Simkhat Torah - are commonly thought of as part of Sukkot but are actually separate holidays. Sukkot is referred to as *Zeman Simkhateinu*, the Season of our Rejoicing.

The word "Sukkot" means "booths," and refers to the temporary dwellings that we are commanded to live in during this holiday. We are also commanded to take in hand the "four species" (strong, lulav, myrtle and willow) and shake them in all directions, symbolizing the power of God everywhere.

Like Passover and Shavu'ot, Sukkot has a dual significance: historical and agricultural. The holiday commemorates the forty-year period during which the children of Israel were wandering in the desert, living in temporary shelters. Sukkot is also a harvest festival, called the Festival of Ingathering, as it takes place at the very end of the summer season in Israel. This year the festival season runs from Sunday evening September 23 until nightfall on Tuesday, October 2.

(Adapted by Rabbi Listfield,  
from Jewishvirtuallibrary.org)

## FROM THE PRESIDENT

Well, you can tell the High Holidays are upon us. A group of members volunteered to clean the grounds of the Synagogue, there was a great breakfast prepared thanks to Millie and crew, and Diana polished all the silver. This is another example of our congregation pulling together to get the job done.

It is sometimes hard to realize how much work and money it takes to maintain our building. The electricity, internet, cleaning lady and our wonderful Rabbi are our major expenses, but keeping up our building is an ongoing job. It is so important that we all do our part by paying our dues and making those wonderful donations. Our dues and our people are the lifeblood of our congregation, which is what keeps our Synagogue functioning.

I hope everyone will have a wonderful, happy and healthy New Year, and I look forward to seeing you at our services.

L'Shana Tova,

Sandra

## REMINDER

Attend Etz Chayim's Rabbi Reception and evening service on Erev Rosh Hashanah, September 09, at 7:30 PM. Please bring a dairy or pareve refreshment plated and ready to share with everyone.

## WELCOME!

We are glad to welcome new members to our "family." Benjamin Camenker and Tia Smith have joined Etz Chayim, so be sure to show them what a warm and friendly congregation we are!

## UPCOMING EVENTS

Aug 31-Sep 03	Limmud Festival at Camp Ramah Darom
Sep 01	8 PM at EC, Havdalah, movie, refreshments & Selihot services
Sep 09	Rabbi Reception, Erev Rosh Hashanah, bring dairy or pareve dessert to share
Sep 10, 11	Rosh Hashanah
Sep 19	Yom Kippur followed by the Break the Fast
Sep 24-30	Sukkot
Sep 30	4 PM at EC, Donor Concert and refreshments in the sukkah

## SISTERHOOD

Greetings Ladies,

Thanks to everyone who came out to clean the Synagogue grounds for the Holidays, and thanks to Millie and her helpers for the wonderful breakfast she prepared for the workers.

Our first meeting of the new year will be a Lunch Bunch on 15 October. The location is to be announced in the October Shofar. If you have suggestions

as to where you would like to meet (or suggestions for a program), please let Amy know. We are always open for new, fun things to do.

Please remember to bring a dairy/pareve snack for the Rabbi's reception on Rosh Hashanah. It should already be on a tray so that there is no mess in the kitchen. If you want to help prepare the Break-the-Fast, please contact me so I can let you know when and what time.

Thanks to all of you who support our New Year Booklet by purchasing memorials, greetings and selling advertisements. We would not be able to do the things we do for our Synagogue without your help. If you haven't sent in your payment yet, please send it to Brenda Liles as soon as you can. We received additional donations from some along with their payments, and I want to thank all of you who think of us when making contributions. Donations are always appreciated. Your books will be at the Synagogue on Rosh Hashanah. The books are only available to those who purchased a greeting, memorial or advertisement.

If you haven't sent in your Sisterhood dues of only \$18, please remember to do that as well. These dues haven't been increased in many years, and we really appreciate them.

Natha Hancock

## A BIG GROUNDS CLEANING THANK YOU

Thank you to the members who helped with the cleanup of the Synagogue grounds and with the breakfast for the workers.

The Clean-Up Crew: Larry Levitt; The Hancock Family, Scott, Natha, and Gavin; Jon Berger; Gary Hall; Bill Brigadier; Eric Jackson; Bill Goldberg; Charlie Fisher; Marvin Kalachman; Ben Camenker; Howie Ross; and Manya Fuerst, and Howard Polin, who was there in spirit if not in the flesh.

The Breakfast Makers: Shirley Roberts; Millie Rosenthal; Janet Schindler; Natha Hancock, Diana Polin; Manya Fuerst; Sandra Wiederecht and Robin Kirby.

The grounds look beautiful for the High Holidays, thanks to all who participated in the work.

The synagogue spirit lives on.

Max

## SUKKOT CONCERT

Please join in the mitzvah of shaking the lulav & etrog, snacking in the Sukkah, and gathering food to stock the Food Pantry shelves prior to Thanksgiving!

The Huntsville string ensemble, **Consort l'ancienne**, will present a special concert of Popular Jewish, Liturgical, and Klezmer music to benefit the Food Pantry.

Collection of food will begin at 4pm, followed by a brief Sukkot service, then music (weather permitting refreshments and concert will be in the Sukkah). Please bring a donation of items for the food bank.

**Admission** to the concert: donation of food items for the Food Pantry.

**Refreshments:** cookies provided by Etz Chayim Sisterhood.

**Concert:** by Consort l'ancienne.

**Date and Time:** Sunday, September 30, beginning at 4pm.

**Location:** Etz Chayim Synagogue, 7705 Bailey Cove Road, Huntsville, AL 35802.

## ONEGS

Aug 31 Thompson  
Sep 07 Goodman  
Sep 14 Zelickson  
Sep 21 TBD  
Sep 28 Schwartz

## DONATIONS

### Sisterhood Fund

From: Sandra Wiederecht

To: Dorothy Goldberg - Thinking of you and hope you are feeling better.

To: Barry Meyer & Family - In Memory of Barry's sister-in-law, Patricia Meyer.

From: Michelle & Jonathan Persons

From: Diana & Howard Polin  
For: High Holiday Flowers

### Rabbi Fund

From: Linda & Fred Kolchin

In Honor of the High Holidays

### Randy Sacks Fund

From: Linda & Fred Kolchin

### General Fund

From: Bernard Backer

In Honor of the High Holidays

### Joe Sacks Memorial Fund

From: Linda & Fred Kolchin

In Memory of our good friend, Joe Sacks

### Rabbi Discretionary Fund

From: Linda & Fred Kolchin

### Outdoor Lighting Fund

From: Natha Hancock & Robin Slomka & their Families

In Memory of Gertrude and Perry Schlein

## BIRTHDAYS

Sep 06 Janet Schindler  
Sep 08 Arlene Polin White  
Sep 14 Robin Slomka  
Sep 15 Larisa Thomason  
Sep 18 Sara Brigadier  
Sep 18 Rudy Sainker  
Sep 19 Russell Roberts  
Sep 23 Jesse Kalachman  
Sep 26 Molly Lapidus

## ANNIVERSARIES

Sep 03 Sandy & Marvin Kalachman  
Sep 17 Sandy Pepper & Fernando Cerezo

## YAHREZEITS\*\*

Sep 01	Elul 21	Phil Wiederecht*
Sep 02	Elul 22	William Karmiol*
Sep 02	Elul 22	Beatrice Sainker*
Sep 03	Elul 23	Alfred Freeman, MD
Sep 04	Elul 24	Abe Goldberg
Sep 05	Elul 25	Percy Sacks*
Sep 07	Elul 27	Nannie Ford
Sep 10	Tishrei 01	Leon Beck
Sep 11	Tishrei 02	Daniel Flank*
Sep 14	Tishrei 05	Louis B. Lepp*
Sep 15	Tishrei 06	Sylvia Zarovsky
Sep 16	Tishrei 07	Sam Natt*
Sep 16	Tishrei 07	Walter Ford
Sep 17	Tishrei 08	Jerome Gaftman
Sep 18	Tishrei 09	Rose Schindler
Sep 19	Tishrei 10	Shirley Irene Jacobs*
Sep 19	Tishrei 10	Zachary Fuerst
Sep 20	Tishrei 11	Murray Rosenthal*
Sep 22	Tishrei 13	Bernard Fisher
Sep 23	Tishrei 14	Terry Lee Green*
Sep 25	Tishrei 16	Capt. Robert Secher*
Sep 29	Tishrei 20	Randy Sacks*
Sep 29	Tishrei 20	Alex Greenbaum
Sep 29	Tishrei 20	Mariam Wertheim

\* Plaque

\*\*Light Memorial candle sunset of previous evening

## HIGH HOLIDAYS QUESTION: A REWARD FOR NO TEMPTATION?

By Ted Roberts

My rabbi loves challenges, so he loves my halachic questions. "So, Ted," he says, "any arcane halachic questions today?"

We go to his office where he keeps, in a secret drawer, his wife's delicious plum cake.

Now that I've got him in a mellow mood, I begin. "OK, here's a tough one tailored for Yom Kippur."

"I'm ready," he says as he sips his beverage. "OK," I begin. "Picture an evil man - not a Hitler, not a Haman, Not an Abbas - not a thug. Just a consistent louse. This no-goodnik keeps none of the mitzvahs. He loves pork roast, he works on his lawn on Shabbos, he drives to the neighborhood bar three times a week, including Friday night, where he takes the name of the Lord in vain for three or four hours.

And if the bartender gives him change for a twenty instead of a ten, he gloats and keeps it.

He cheats on his wife, on his business associates, and has no time for his kids.

My Rabbi nods. "One day," I continue, "this ethically imperfect Jew takes a cruise with several of his fellow devils where they plan to gamble, drink, violate the Sabbath, chase women, and toss around the name of the Lord like it was a five-dollar poker chip. But Rabbi - as you know - man proposes to play golf - G-d disposes of clear skies and sends the storm. The cruise ship hits a Caribbean iceberg. (God's power always trumps geography.) Our sinner is shipwrecked. For one year he sits on a rock pile and exists on raw fish as his entree and palm leaves for salad. He can't even make a fire. He mistreats nobody, since there's nobody to mistreat. He cheats not on his wife, since there's no one to cheat with this side of Miami. He doesn't even curse. What fun is it? Who's to hear?"

He keeps the Shabbos; no car, no fire, no TV. He doesn't muzzle his ox, since he has no ox. He doesn't sow his field with two kinds of seeds, since he has no seeds, no fields.

Our ex-ethical thug, as Yom Kippur rolls around, is now a Tzadik. So, here's my question: Is he inscribed in the Book of Life? Does he get a golden star from the Judge of all mankind, even though his past record is as crummy as stale pound cake? And please, Rabbi, don't tell me that nothing has changed, that he's still propelled by an evil heart. Because you explained in one of your sermons, remember, that Judaism is a religion of deeds, not intentions. Nobody has a pure heart - it's how we control those evil inclinations that spring from our human heart - that's what counts. Action, deeds. Jimmy Carter, ex-prez "who lusted only in his heart", would never be condemned by us, right? So long as he didn't act on his libidinous impulses? So, Rabbi, what's

your answer? Has our protagonist redeemed himself?" Dear Reader, why don't you ask your Rabbi.

Ted Roberts, "The Scribbler on the Roof," is a syndicated Jewish columnist and longtime member of our Synagogue. Buy Ted's collected works at Amazon.com or the Sisterhood Gift Shop. Ted welcomes your comment and/or critique and can be emailed at: [shirlr@hiwaay.net](mailto:shirlr@hiwaay.net)

**Huntsville Conservative Synagogue  
High Holy Day Services Schedule  
2018 -5779**

***Etz Chayim Congregation***  
***(256) 881-6260***

***7705 Bailey Cove Road, SE.***  
***Huntsville, Alabama 35802***

**Rosh Hashanah**

Evening Services & Welcome Rabbi Listfield	Sun, Sept. 09	7:30 p.m.
Morning & Shofar Services	Mon, Sept. 10	9:30 a.m.
Tashlich, immediately after services		
Evening Services	Mon, Sept. 10	7:30 p.m.
Morning & Shofar Services	Tue, Sept. 11	9:30 a.m.

**Shabbat Shuvah Weekend**

Evening Services	Fri, Sept. 14	7:30 p.m.
Optional Prelim. Service	Sat, Sept. 15	9:45 a.m.
Morning Services	Sat, Sept. 15	10:30 a.m.
Torah Service, Musaf, Lunch & Learn	Sat, Sept. 15	11:00 a.m.
Tashlich, at Aldrich Creek bridge		
Weatherly Rd		
Build Sukkah Frame	Sun, Sept. 16	9:45 a.m.
	Sun, Sept. 16	10:00 a.m.

**Yom Kippur**

Kol Nidre Service	Tue, Sept. 18	6:30 p.m.
Morning Services	Wed, Sept. 19	9:30 a.m.
Torah Services (approximately at)	Wed, Sept. 19	10:30 a.m.
Mincha, Yizkor, N'ilah & Ma'ariv Services	Wed, Sept. 19	5:00 p.m.
Congregation Break the Fast Dinner	Wed, Sept. 19	7:15 p.m.

**Sukkot.**

Add Roof & Decorate Sukkah at Etz Chayim	Sun, Sept 23	3:00 p.m.
Morning Services	Mon-Sun, Sept 24-30	9:45 a.m.
Evening Services	Fri, Sept 28	7:30 p.m.
Morning Services	Sat, Sept 29	9:30 a.m.
Hoshanah Rabah Morning Services	Sun, Sept 30	9:30 a.m.
Donor Concert & Refreshments in Sukkah	Sun, Sept 30	4:00 p.m.
 Kiddush in Etz Chayim Sukkah	 Daily	 12:00 p.m.

**Shemini Atzeret**

Morning Services	Mon, Oct 01	9:45 a.m.
Yizkor (after Torah Service, approximately at)	Mon, Oct 01	10:30 a.m.

**Simchat Torah**

Evening Congregation Pot Luck Dairy Dinner	Mon, Oct 01	6:00 p.m.
Evening Hakafot Services	Mon, Oct 01	6:45 p.m.

***“IT IS A TREE OF LIFE TO THEM THAT HOLD FAST TO IT”***