

TEMPLE BETH EL
Cedarhurst, NY



HIGH HOLIDAY GUIDE 5781

INTRODUCTION

Welcome to the High Holidays 5781 / COVID-19 Edition. The pandemic has left its mark on virtually every aspect of our daily lives and routines. These High Holidays will be like none that you have ever experienced before. Temple Beth El has gone to great lengths to craft a mix of online and in-person services that we hope will allow each and every one of our members to celebrate the holidays in a manner that is safe, comfortable and meaningful. The procedures and protocols will be quite different this year and we wish to communicate them to you fully. Please take a few minutes to read through this guide thoroughly. It should serve to answer most of your questions and explain the necessary steps you must take to participate in our services. As always, please call the Temple office with any additional questions you may have.

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MAKING THE SYNAGOGUE SAFE

All of our Shabbat and Holiday services will now be held in the Main Sanctuary. The Sanctuary has been essentially empty and untouched since we shut down last March. Nevertheless, we have taken the following steps to assure everyone's safety.

- All preparations conform with NY State Guidelines and Requirements
- The sanctuary is being deep-cleaned and sanitized prior to the Holidays.
- Special HEPA filters and UV lights have been installed in the air-conditioning to clean and purify the air.
- Plexiglass shields have been installed around the lecterns on the Bima.
- Social distancing procedures will be in place throughout the synagogue. Assigned seating will be spread throughout the Sanctuary. YOU WILL NOT BE SITTING IN YOUR ACCUSTOMED SEATS!
- Masks MUST be worn in the synagogue at all times.
- *Machzorim* and *Talitot* will be packaged and left for you at your seat.
- Access to the bathrooms and the elevator will be monitored to limit the number of occupants.
- Advance Reservations will be required for all services.
- Temperatures will be taken before being admitted to the synagogue.

THE SYNAGOGUE SERVICE

The most noticeable change will be the length of the synagogue service. Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur morning services are being shortened significantly to approximately 2 hours. This is being done to minimize the length of time that we will be gathered together indoors. It also is an acknowledgement that there is only so long that one can sit in front of a computer at home. Services will include all of the most significant prayers, the Torah reading and Haftorah and the Rabbi's sermon. Other sections of the service will be condensed or eliminated to maintain the time frame.

To maintain social distancing, there will be no procession with the Torah. We will forego the traditional honors of coming up to the Bima for English readings and ark openings. Those reciting the Torah blessings will do so from their seats. Participants will be asked to remain in their places at all times, not to wander and greet one another and, of course, to wear their masks at all times.

SERVICES ONLINE

The majority of our congregants have already expressed a preference of participating in services from the safety and comfort of their homes. We applaud those decisions and we encourage anyone with health concerns and any of the risk factors for COVID-19 to please remain at home. The Conservative movement has ruled that under the current health emergency it is completely permissible – and in fact preferable – to stay at home and watch services online. The preservation of life takes precedence over all other mitzvot.

Most of our High Holiday services will be “live-streamed” – some will be conducted via Zoom. What's the difference? Here's a quick definition:

ZOOM – Zoom is the “online platform” that most people have become familiar with during the pandemic. It is very effective with small groups. Zoom is interactive allowing people to speak back and forth with one another, sing and interact in any way they like.

Zoom may be accessed from your phone or computer. Up until now, all of our online services have taken place via Zoom.

LIVE STREAMING – A bit different from Zoom, live streaming is more akin to broadcasting. It is a one-way feed, which means that those watching at home will see and hear everything, but cannot communicate or interact with those on the other end of the live stream. Live streaming is more effective with larger groups and with streaming from a fixed location – in our case, the Main sanctuary. Like Zoom, live-streaming may be easily accessed from your computer or phone. Live-streaming is new for us and is currently being set up.

Everyone will be provided with the links for the live-stream and zooming of services prior to the Holidays. We know that these technologies are foreign and intimidating to many of our members. We will be providing several practice sessions during the week before the holidays when you will be able to try logging on and will be able to call the office for assistance if you run into difficulties.

Please note that all **Daily Minyan services** will continue to be conducted via Zoom.

MACHZORIM FOR HOME USE

Those who will be participating in services from home will want to pick up copies of our High Holiday *Machzor* (prayer book) to follow the services. Books will be available for pick-up in the Rotunda on **Wednesday and Thursday, September 9 and 10 and Monday thru Thursday, September 14-17** in the Rotunda. We will ask you to please sign for the books and then return them after the holiday. Anyone needing a Talit is also welcome to borrow one.

SERVICES IN THE SYNAGOGUE

We welcome all those who are in good health and who do not have ANY of the risk factors for COVID-19 to join us in the synagogue.

**ADVANCE RESERVATIONS ARE REQUIRED FOR ATTENDANCE AT ALL SERVICES.
NO ONE WILL BE ADMITTED WHO HAS NOT PRE-REGISTERED. YOU WILL BE
TURNED AWAY AT THE DOOR!!!**

**A RESERVATION FORM AND WAIVER IS ENCLOSED WITH THIS PACKET. YOU
MUST FILL OUT BOTH SIDES OF THE FORM, SIGN AND RETURN TO THE TEMPLE
OFFICE BY SEPTEMBER 8 !
RESERVATIONS RECEIVED AFTER SEPTEMBER 8 MAY NOT BE ACCOMMODATED!**

Tickets will be mailed to all participants a few days before Rosh HaShanah. Your seats will be indicated on your tickets. All entry and exit will be through the Rotunda entrance on Broadway under the awning.

When you arrive at the synagogue for services you will be greeted outside the Rotunda. Your name will be double-checked on our list and your temperature will be taken. Only then will you be admitted to services. Please arrive a bit early and allow extra time to go through the check-in process.

YIZKOR

The Yizkor Memorial Service on Yom Kippur is among the most important and meaningful services for many. We are continuing our practice of holding Yizkor late in the afternoon on Yom Kippur at approximately 6:15 PM. You may attend Yizkor in the synagogue or participate online. Our Yizkor Memorial Book will be available for pick-up prior to Yom Kippur.

SOUNDING THE SHOFAR

It is traditional to sound the shofar every morning during the month of Elul leading up to the celebration of Rosh HaShanah. During this period, you may access the shofar blowing in the daily Keren Ohr. Rabbi Kupchik is also sounding the shofar each day at our Mincha / Ma'ariv services at 7:45 PM.

Since the first day of Rosh HaShanah falls on Shabbat this year, the shofar is not blown. It will be sounded at services on Sunday, September 20, the second day of Rosh HaShanah and again at the conclusion of Yom Kippur.

Rabbi Kupchik will be glad to visit anyone to allow them to hear the shofar sounded. Please call the office to make arrangements.

PERSONAL PRAYERS BEFORE THE ARK

Many of our congregants have found the custom of approaching the open Ark during Neilah to offer personal prayers and reflections to be especially meaningful. For those who are not coming to services at the synagogue, we are pleased to offer the opportunity for private prayers before the Ark with Rabbi Kupchik during the week between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur. You may schedule in a 10-minute time slot to say a few of the traditional prayers and offer your own, as well by calling the Temple office. No one else will be in the Sanctuary at the time, so there is no risk of exposure to others.

You may schedule your visit on **Tuesday, September 22 between 2 and 3 PM and between 7 and 7:40 PM**. Rabbi Kupchik will be sounding the shofar at **2:30, 3:00 and 7:30 PM** for all who wish to participate.

IN CONCLUSION

We have tried to make this Guide as comprehensive and as easy to follow as possible. Please call us with any additional questions or for clarifications.

The clergy, professional staff and lay leadership of Temple Beth El all join in wishing you a Happy and Healthy New Year!