
High Holiday Services



**Congregation for
Humanistic Judaism**

Fairfield County, Connecticut



Congregation for Humanistic Judaism
Fairfield County, CT

Statement of Purpose

We are a welcoming, supportive community, founded in 1967, in which secular Jews and their families can affirm, celebrate and enrich their Jewish identity and values.

We subscribe to Humanistic Judaism, one of the five branches of Judaism recognized by the United Jewish Communities of North America. We are affiliated with the Society for Humanistic Judaism and the International Federation of Secular Humanistic Jews.

Humanistic Judaism defined:

- A humanist believes that a Jew is a person of Jewish descent or any person who declares himself or herself to be a Jew and who identifies with the history, ethical values, culture, civilization, community and experiences of the Jewish people. (Adopted by the International Federation of Secular Humanistic Jews, October, 1988.)
- A humanist believes that each person, whether or not he or she believes in God, is responsible for leading a moral, ethical life that will add to the greater good of humanity, without reliance on supernatural forces or theological authority.
- Humanistic Judaism combines the Jewish values of loving-kindness (Gemilut Chassadim), charity (T'zedakah) and making the world a better place (Tikkun Olam) with the recognition that the responsibility for putting them in practice lies in one's own hands.

Congregation Practices at CHJ:

Our community functions as a cooperative. Through diverse programs and online forums, we:

- Educate ourselves and our children in Jewish history, culture, tradition and values;
- Celebrate and observe Jewish holidays and mark important life cycle events in meaningful, non-theistic ways;
- Engage in social action and community service;
- Explore philosophic and ethical issues in group discussion;
- Keep current on issues of concern to Jewish people and support Israel in its quest for peace;
- Foster an understanding of Humanistic Judaism in the broader community; and
- Dedicate ourselves to creating a compassionate community whose members treat each other with respect, dignity and caring.

(Excerpted from the CHJ Statement of Purpose, revised June 2002)

ROSH HASHANAH



**CONGREGATION FOR HUMANISTIC JUDAISM
FAIRFIELD COUNTY, CONNECTICUT**

ROSH HASHANAH

[Musical Prelude]

I. OPENING

Song Leader: “In the seventh month on the first day of the month, there shall be a solemn service, a time to refrain from work, a day of commemoration proclaimed to the sound of the Shofar.”
(Lev. 23:24)

**Song Leader
& Shofar:** T'kee-ah! ! תקיעה
T'kee-ah! ! תקיעה
T'kee-ah! ! תקיעה

Leader 1: Tonight, all over the world, the Shofar will sound, and that cry will be understood by Jews in Israel and throughout the diaspora. No matter what language Jews speak to conduct their secular or spiritual lives, the poignant bleat of the ram's horn transcends mere words.

The Shofar is the ritual horn of ancient Israel, recalling primitive times when the ram's horn summoned families and tribes to solemn assembly. Its emphatic cry, in every age, remains a call to conscience.

Leader 2: Tonight, we assemble to the sound of the Shofar to review and reconsider our lives. Rosh Hashanah heralds an opportunity for new beginnings. Now is the time to pause and reflect, to evaluate the past year and to discard what no longer fits the person we want to be. Self-reflection, self-evaluation, self-renewal: These are the tasks we are called to by the Shofar's blast. Our minds are open to broader issues, but Rosh Hashanah reminds us to begin with self-improvement.

With Jews everywhere, we celebrate the significance of this day, the first day of Tishri, as we usher in a period of reflection that culminates on Yom Kippur. It is good to gather in our own community on Rosh Hashanah, “The Head of the Year.”

**Song Leader &
Congregation:** **Hineh Ma Tov**
Hi-neh ma tov u-ma na-eem
She-vet a-cheem gam ya-chad. (repeat many times)
(Behold how good and pleasant it is to dwell together in unity.)

Greeting: **Congregation Leader**

Leader 1: In the twilight of the vanishing year, thanksgiving fills our hearts.

Congregation: *Our souls are stirred by the memory of joy, as Rosh Hashanah and the new year begin.*

Leader 1: We were sustained by love and kindness; comforted in times of sorrow; found happiness in our homes and gladness with our friends. Our hearts fill with thanksgiving as the new year begins.

Congregation: *As the new year begins, our spirits rise in grateful song.*

Leader 1: But there were dreams that came to naught, and times when we refused to dream. These, with much regret, we now remember, as the new year begins.

Congregation: *As the new year begins, contrition fills our souls.*

Leader 1: Some of our days were dark with grief. We shed tears for the ties that were broken. We look back with sorrow, as the new year begins.

Congregation: *As the new year begins, tears well up within us.*

Leader 1: Yet we look ahead with hope, giving thanks for the chance of renewal, for the promise of good to come. May this Rosh Hashanah, birthday of the world, be our day of rebirth into life and peace, serenity and safety, as the new year begins.

Congregation: *As the new year begins, so is hope reborn with us!*

II. SHOFAR

Song Leader: "Sound the Shofar on the New Moon, at the time appointed for our festival day."

(Psalms 81:4)

**Song Leader
& Shofar:**

T'kee-ah!	תקיעה !
She-va-reem!	שברים !
Te-roo-ah!	תרועה !
T'kee-ah!	תקיעה !

Leader 1: Today, wherever Jews are, the call of the Shofar resounds. It speaks to our hearts, our minds, and our souls. It rouses us to listen to the voice within.

"Awake, O sleepers, Awake from your sleep!" cries the Shofar. "Search your deeds and ...look to your souls, and better your ways and actions."

(Adapted from Maimonides, 12th century Jewish scholar)

Leader 1: We will spend the coming days reflecting on where we have been and where we are going, for our future must be informed by our past.

Leader 2: The sound of the ram's horn is sharp;
 It breaks through the echoes of the day just spent;
 It cuts through our usual occupations and concerns;
 It penetrates the air and makes this a special place;
 It marks the time.

The sound of the horn is like no other sound;
 It pierces the armor of the heart.

Reader 1: Sounds fill the air about us
 But we do not listen to them all.

We select, we decide
 Which sounds we respond to.

What do we really care to hear?
 A baby crying, a sound of beauty, a word of love, a cry for help?

Reader 2: What *will* we hear?
 What will cause us to turn,
 To renew a part of life
 Which too quickly passes by?

When our children tell us their troubles
 Or proudly share their joys, do we really listen?

Reader 1: Do we hear the loneliness of our elders
 Through their talk, as through their silence?
 And when we hear, do we turn in understanding?

Do we help the young to hear the voice of the ages?
 Do we help their elders to hear the beat of the new?

Reader 2: Do we listen to the sounds of nature,
 To a bird, to a breeze
 Or lose them in offensive noise?

Do we hear the sounds of chaos and of creation in our own lives?
 And hearing, do we love each other more?

Reader 1: Today the Shofar calls out to remind us that time does not
 stand still. And that it is never too late.

It is an alarm, to waken us from that slumber and stupor
 Which shut out concern for others, and for ourselves.

III. CANDLE LIGHTING

[When Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbat, begin the Candle Lighting ceremony here:]

Leader 2: Tonight we celebrate both Rosh Hashanah and Shabbat. May the flames of these Sabbath lights brighten our paths and help us see the good we can do.

[Shabbat candles are lit]

Song Leader & Congregation: **Mah Yafeh Hayom**

Mah yafeh hayom, shabbat shalom. (repeat)

Shabbat, shabbat shalom (repeat 3 times)

Shabbat, shalom.

(How beautiful is the Sabbath day, Sabbath peace.)

[If Rosh Hashanah and Shabbat do not coincide, begin the Candle Lighting ceremony here:]

Leader 2: Candles are a powerful symbol in Judaism, used on both joyous and mournful occasions. The flames we kindle represent the eternal flame of the Jewish people and connect us with our heritage.

Leader 1: In the candle's flame we see the spark of life and the inner light of humanity, which we seek to turn to good ends. Together we have the power to push back the darkness.

[Music and Silent Reflection as the Humanorah is lit]

**Leader 2
& Congregation:** *Radiant is the light in the world.
Radiant is the light within each of us.
Radiant is the light of life.*

Song Leader & Congregation: **Ay-fo o-ree?**

*Where is my light? My light is in me.
Where is my hope? My hope is in me.
Where is my strength? My strength is in me.
And in you. And in you.
Where is my strength? My strength is in me.
And in you. And in you.*

*Ay-fo-o-ree? O-ree be.
Ay-fo tik-va-tee? Tik-va-tee be.
Ay-fo ko kheh? Ko-khee be.
V'gam bakh. V'gam bakh.
Ay-fo ko-khee? Ko-khee be.
V'gam bakh. V'gam bakh.*

*Where is my light? My light is in me.
Where is my hope? My hope is in me.
Where is my strength? My strength is in me.
And in you. And in you.
Where is my strength? My strength is in me.
And in you. And in you.*
(Where is My Light? - Music, Mickie & Abe Mandel; Lyrics, Rabbi Sherwin Wine)

IV. THE MESSAGE OF ROSH HASHANAH

Leader 2: It is Rosh Hashanah, a time of reflection and aspiration. We plumb the past for memories and their meanings. We assess our potential for becoming our best selves. We look backward and forward, but we do not stand still.

Reader 3: The Birthday of the World

On the birthday of the world
I begin to contemplate
what I have done and left
undone, but this year
not so much rebuilding

of my perennially damaged
psyche, shoring up eroding
friendships, digging out
stumps of old resentments
that refuse to rot on their own.

No, this year I want to call
myself to task for what
I have done and not done
for peace. How much have
I dared in opposition?

How much have I put
on the line for freedom?
For mine and others?
As these freedoms are pared,
sliced and diced, where

have I spoken out? Who
have I tried to move? In
this holy season, I stand
self-convicted of sloth
in a time when lies choke

the mind and rhetoric
bends reason to slithering
choking pythons. Here
I stand before the gates
opening, the fire dazzling

my eyes, and as I approach
what judges me, I judge
myself. Give me weapons
of minute destruction. Let
my words turn into sparks.

(Marge Piercy)

Leader 2: On Rosh Hashanah, we sit in judgment of ourselves. The reality of our daily lives meets the sharp scrutiny of our ideals. The list of our deeds stands exposed. This is a time for truth, a time to respond to difficult questions.

Leader 1: Have I expressed the love I feel for my dear ones, or have I shut them out? Have I treated others honestly, or have I cheated them, thereby cheating myself?

Leader 2: Have I spoken out when I should have, or remained silent in fear of what others might say? Have I accepted the challenge of new ideas, or do I cling blindly to the old?

Leader 1: Have I developed my talents to the limit, or settled for mere adequacy? Have I burrowed in the narrow rut of comfortable routine?

Leader 2: Have my words become tired? Has my imagination grown stale?

Leader 1: Is my courage spent? Have I been less than I can be?
(Rabbi Daniel Friedman, adapted)

Leader 2: Traditional Jewish teachings speak of Rosh Hashanah as a day of divine judgment. As Humanistic Jews, we must assume all roles in our process of looking inward. We must admit our shortcomings, confess our misdeeds, and accept responsibility. Then we must forgive ourselves and prepare for the year to come.

Leader 1: No other person can give meaning to my life. While I cannot control all the factors that define my life, I possess the capacity to determine, if not the length of my days, at least their quality and depth.

Leader 2: We want to be so much more than we are. We want to be wiser, kinder, more vital, and more confident in the act of living. We want to seize the world zestfully and turn it to some urgent purpose.

The task is daunting. Each Rosh Hashanah brings new resolutions, most of which we fail to keep. We fear the risk of failure in the unfamiliar. New ideas, new ways, new faces—all threaten our comfort zone.

Leader 1: Still, we must pursue the dreams that challenge us with their visions. We need to seek out and celebrate the strength in our own selves.

We must be bold enough to discover our virtues and strong enough to bear our mistakes. The philosopher Kierkegaard reminds us: "To venture causes anxiety; but not to venture is to lose one's self."

Reader 4: I will not die an unlived life.
I will not live in fear
of falling or catching fire.
I choose to inhabit my days,
to allow my living to open me,
to make me less afraid,
more accessible,
to loosen my heart
until it becomes a wing,
a torch, a promise.
I choose to risk my significance;
to live so that which comes to me as seed
goes to the next as blossom
and that which comes to me as blossom
goes on as fruit. (Dawna Markova)

**Reader 4
& Congregation:** **And let us say together:**
*This moment, this night, this community grants me the time and permission
to search within, to find the knowledge and courage to fashion my way
forward.*

[Music and Silent Reflection]

Leader 2: At the turning of the season, we see the natural world in flux. The leaves turn from green to red and gold. The birds head once more toward the south. Animals begin to store their food for the winter.

Congregation: *For leaves, birds, and animals, turning comes instinctively. But for me, turning does not come easily.*

Leader 2: It takes an act of will for us to change. It means breaking old habits; it means losing face. It means starting all over again.

Congregation: *It means saying, "I am sorry." It means recognizing that I have the ability to change.*

Leader 2: Change is hard, often painful. But unless we turn, we will be trapped in yesterday's ways. Then let us turn—from callousness to sensitivity, from hostility to love, from pettiness to purpose, from envy to contentment, from carelessness to discipline, from fear to hope.

Congregation: *And let us turn toward each other, for in isolation there is no life.*
(Rabbi Jack Riemer, adapted)

**Song Leader &
Congregation:**

Kehillah Kedoshah

*If you are “a-tem,” then we’re “ni-tza-vim.”
We stand here today and remember the dream.
If you are “a-tem,” then we’re “ni-tza-vim.”
We stand here today and remember the dream.*

*Kehillah kedoshah, kehillah kedosha,
Kehillah kedoshah, kehillah kedosha.*

*Lai lai lai, lai lai. Lai lai lai, lai lai. Lai lai lai, lai lai. Lai.
Lai lai lai, lai lai. Lai lai lai, lai lai. Lai lai lai, lai lai. Lai.*

*Each one of us must play a part.
Each one of us must heed the call.
Each one of us must seek the truth.
Each one of us is a part of it all.
Each one of us must remember the pain.
Each one of us must find the joy.
Each one of us, each one of us.*

*Kehillah kedoshah, kehillah kedosha,
Kehillah kedoshah, kehillah kedosha.*

*Each one of us must start to hear.
Each one of us must sing the song.
Each one of us must do the work.
Each one of us must right the wrong.
Each one of us must build the home.
Each one of us must hold the hope.
Each one of us, each one of us.*

*Kehillah kedoshah, kehillah kedosha,
Kehillah kedoshah, kehillah kedosha.*

*Lai lai lai, lai lai. Lai lai lai, lai lai. Lai lai lai, lai lai. Lai.
Lai lai lai, lai lai. Lai lai lai, lai lai. Lai lai lai, lai lai. Lai.*

*(Sacred Community, Music & Lyrics,
Dan Nichols & Rabbi Mike Moskowitz)*

Leader 1: According to tradition, it is the year ____ of the Jewish people. We reflect on how we have endured and remained cohesive.

Leader 2: It is the year ____ of our nation. We reflect on Jewish life in America since colonial times, and how we have thrived in its climate of freedom.

Leader 1: It is the year ____ of the state of Israel. We reflect on its struggle to be strong yet remain a beacon of justice and righteousness.

Leader 2: It is the year ____ of our congregation. We reflect on our efforts to define a contemporary Judaism and forge a strong community.

Leader 1: We gratefully acknowledge all that the past year has brought us of life and health, of love and joy, of beauty and truth, of strength and courage. Whatever good we have known this year, we reflect upon with gratitude; yet, we also reflect upon our sorrows, failures, and disappointments.

Leader 2: Who of us can be entirely content with even our personal lives when we know the injustices in the world? And, yet, the New Year is a reminder and celebration of the eternal possibility of renewal and improvement.

Leader 1: May this day help us to find meaning in our lives. Let the Shofar's call also awaken the voice of our communal conscience and call us to action.

Leader 2 & Congregation: **And let us say together:**
May the spirit of our coming together this night grant us peace, that most precious gift, and give us the will to proclaim its message to all the peoples of the earth.

Song Leader & Congregation: **Na-a-se Shalom**

*Na-a-se sha-lom ba-o-lam
 Na-a-se sha-lom a-ley-nu.
 V'al kol ha-o-lam
 V'im-ru, im ru sha-lom.*

*Na-a-se sha-lom
 Na-a-se sha-lom
 Sha-lom a-ley-nu,
 V'al kol ha-o-lam.*

*Na-a-se sha-lom
 Na-a-se sha-lom
 Sha-lom a-ley-nu,
 V'al kol ha-o-lam.*

(Let us bring peace upon ourselves and upon all the world. Music, Nurit Hirsch)

VI. TORAH CEREMONY

Leader 1: Our tradition asserts itself in the symbol of the Torah. This ancient scroll contains much of the early record of our people's experience. Their trials and successes, their mistakes and achievements, are revealed with all the color and fury of a glorious history. Through the Torah we learn the customs and laws, the questions and answers of our own ancient family. Although many centuries separate us from the events and beliefs of our ancestors, there is wisdom to be gleaned from their stories, and their courage and passion still speak to our hearts.

For ceremonial purposes, Jews have continued to read from handwritten parchment Torahs in scroll form, housed in arks. Our congregation has such a scroll, a Torah from Czechoslovakia, salvaged from the Holocaust. We feel honored to have this Torah as a permanent loan from the London synagogue that restores and conserves such precious relics.

**Leader 1 &
Congregation:**

Let us say together:

With Jews the world over, we read tonight to honor tradition and to connect us to the ancient Jewish text.

Leader 1:

Please stand as the Torah is removed from the ark.

[Music]

Leader 1:

Please be seated and enjoy listening to this evening's reading. As Jewish Humanists we are comfortable in freely interpreting the text, looking beyond the literal message for truths and insights that speak to us today. At times we may venture beyond the five books of the Torah, seeking wisdom from other books of the Hebrew Bible.

Tonight we will hear a passage from _____, followed by a commentary.

[Readings]

Leader 1:

Please stand as the Torah is returned to the ark.

[Music]

Leader 1:

Please be seated.

[Commentary]

VII. MEMORIAL SERVICE

Leader 2:

Let us pause now for a moment as we recall those whom we have loved who are no longer among us. Though vanished from our sight, they live on in our hearts. What was good in their lives endures in our memory. We are grateful for their lives, for their time with us and our companionship with them, and for the sweet memories they left behind.

**Leader 2
& Congregation:**

We say together:

In tribute to our departed, may we live wisely, courageously and usefully. Thus will they remain as living influences among us.

[Silent Reflection]

Reader 5: In everything, there is at least an eighth
of death. It doesn't weigh much.
With what hidden, peaceful charm
we carry it everywhere we go.
In sweet awakenings,
in our travels,
in our love talk,
when we are unaware,
forgotten in all the corners of our being—
always with us.
And never heavy.

(Leah Goldberg, trans. M. Falk)

[Silent reflection, with music]

Leader 2: We light this memorial candle in honor of those who touched our lives but
are no longer with us.

[Candle is lit]

Leader 2: We light this second memorial candle in memory of the six million lost in
the Holocaust, many of whom left no mourners.

[Candle is lit]

Leader 2: We light this final memorial candle for the lives lost around the world in the
barbaric wars, strife, and acts of terrorism still raging in this century. May it
spark within us the courage and resolve to seek peace, justice, and security
for all.

[Candle is lit]

Reader 6: There are stars whose radiance is visible on earth
though they have long been extinct.
There are people whose brilliance continues to light the world
though they are no longer among the living.
These lights are particularly bright when the night is dark.
They light the way for humankind. *(Hannah Senesh)*

**Song Leader &
Congregation:**

Zay-kher Tza-dee-keem

Zay-kher tza-dee-keem, lee-v'ra-kha.

Zay-kher tza-dee-keem, lee-v'ra-kha.

Lee-v'ra-kha, lee-v'ra-kha,

Zak-kher tza-dee-keem, lee-v'ra-kha.

(The remembrance of righteous people is a blessing to us.)

VIII. CLOSING

Leader 1: Let this New Year be the beginning of a new life in each of us, wherein old things are passed away. Those ideas that remain to feed and encourage our prejudices – let them pass away.

Congregation: *Let them pass away, but not the old thoughts that are still true.*

Leader 1: The anger and bitter feelings – let them pass away.

Congregation: *Let them pass away, but not the old emotions filled with kindness.*

Leader 1: The harsh words, the suspicious looks, the clenched hands and unwilling feet – let them pass away.

Congregation: *Let them pass away, but not the compassion and caring that nourish humankind.*

Leader 1: The new fashions that distract us from behaving responsibly and kindly – let them pass away.

Congregation: *Let them pass away, but not the old habits that guide our conscience.
May all that is good and precious remain, but let the clutter of our heads and hearts depart, that new inspirations and affections may enter to gladden our lives.*

Reader 7: Let the rain come and wash away
the ancient grudges, the bitter hatreds
held and nurtured over generations.
Let the rain wash away the memory
of the hurt, the neglect.
Then let the sun come out and
fill the sky with rainbows.
Let the warmth of the sun heal us
wherever we are broken.
Let it burn away the fog so that
we can see each other clearly.
So that we can see beyond labels,
beyond accents, gender or skin color.
Let the warmth and brightness
of the sun melt our selfishness.
So that we can share the joys and
feel the sorrows of our neighbors.

And let the light of the sun
 be so strong that we will see all
 people as our neighbors.
 Let the earth, nourished by rain,
 bring forth flowers
 to surround us with beauty.
 And let the mountains teach our hearts
 to reach upward to heaven.

(Rabbi Harold S. Kushner)

Song Leader

& Shofar:

T'kee-ah!	תקיעה !
She-va-reem!	שברים !
Te-roo-ah!	תרועה !
T'kee-ah G'do-lah!	תקיעה גדולה !

Leader 2:

In the coming year, and the years that follow, let us renew our commitment to our highest ideals. Let us live mindfully and courageously. Let us welcome new beginnings.

Reader 8:

I opened my door
 and many, many crowded to come in.
 I therefore pushed back
 the walls of my room
 to welcome all my guests.
 And my room became the home
 of my friends
 And my room became the world.

(Amir Gilboa)

Leader 2:

Congregation:

May it be a good year.
May it be a healthy year.

Leader 2:

Congregation:

May it be a year of peace.
May we have the strength to make it so.

Song Leader

& Congregation:

Od Yavo' Shalom Aleinu

*Od yavo' shalom aleinu
 Od yavo' shalom aleinu
 Od yavo' shalom aleinu
 Ve al kulam.*

*Od yavo' shalom aleinu
 Od yavo' shalom aleinu
 Od yavo' shalom aleinu
 Ve al kulam.
 Salaam.*

*Aleinu ve al kol ha olam
Salaam, Shalom.*

*Salaam.
Aleinu ve al kol ha olam
Salaam, Shalom. (repeat all)
(Peace Will Yet Come Upon Us, Music & Lyrics, Mosh Ben-Ari)*

Leader 1: Our Rosh Hashanah service will soon conclude, but let us first symbolically observe a traditional holiday oneg. We will take a moment to appreciate the fruitful earth and those who labor to provide food for our table. And let us never forget those in our community and beyond whose days are defined by hunger.

Leader 2: We celebrate the fruit of the vine and the bounty of nature as we lift this cup and sip. For we are part of nature, which gives us birth and continues to sustain us.

**Leader 2
& Congregation:** **Together we say:**
*May there be such wine
to quench the thirst
of all who are still parched.*

Leader 1: May the sharing of this challah strengthen our bonds with others who walk upon this earth. We are grateful to all who have helped bring bread to our table, and we vow to respond in turn to those in need.

**Leader 1.
& Congregation:** **Let us say together:**
*May there be such bread
to purge the emptiness
of those who yet hunger.*

Song Leader: Let us sing of hope for the New Year.

All: **Bashana Ha-ba'a**

*La la la, la la la
La la la, la la la
Ba-sha-na ba-sha-na, ha-ba'a
Od tir-eh, od tir-eh
Ka-ma tov yi-h'-ye
Ba-sha-na, ba-sha-na, ha-ba-a*

*Soon the day will arrive
When we will be together
And no longer will we live in fear.*

*And the children will smile
Without them wondering whether
On that day, dark new clouds will appear.*

*Wait and see, wait and see
What a world there can be
If we share, if we care, you and me.*

*Wait and see, wait and see
What a world there can be
If we share, if we care, you and me.*

*Some have dreamed, some have died
To make a bright tomorrow
And their vision remains in our hearts.*

*Now the torch must be passed
In hope and not in sorrow,
And a promise to make a new start.*

*La la la, la la la
La la la, la la la
Ba-sha-na ba-sha-na, ha-ba'a*

*Od tir-eh, od tir-eh
Ka-ma tov yi-h'-ye
Ba-sha-na, ba-sha-na, ha-ba-a
La la la, la la la, la la la...*

(Music, Nurit Hirsch; Lyrics, Ehud Manor)

Leader 1:

This concludes our Rosh Hashanah service. We hope you will join us for our Tashlich Ceremony tomorrow and Yom Kippur services next week. Please refer to our website for more information on these and other programs.

L'Shanah Tovah!

YOM KIPPUR

KOL NIDRE



**CONGREGATION FOR HUMANISTIC JUDAISM
FAIRFIELD COUNTY, CONNECTICUT**

YOM KIPPUR / KOL NIDRE

[Musical prelude]

I. OPENING

Piano & Cello: **Eli, Eli** *(David Zahavi)*

Leader 1: Welcome to our Yom Kippur evening service, Kol Nidre. On Rosh Hashanah we expressed our yearning for transformation and renewal. We resolved to shed attitudes that no longer serve us and to cast off old habits that impede change. Many of us continued this soul-searching in the days that followed.

Leader 2: Yom Kippur helps us experience our humanity, to find compassion for ourselves and for others. It creates a space in our lives for mindfulness, for us to be aware of our failings as well as our great capacity to forgive and begin again.

Greeting: **Congregation Leader**

Leader 1: Now, before the Shofar sounds, let us be still within, and share in the spirit of our coming together.

**Song Leader
& Shofar:** T'kee-ah! ! תקיעה
 T'kee-ah! ! תקיעה

Leader 1: Let the Shofar call us to community.

**Song Leader
& Shofar:** T'kee-ah! ! תקיעה

Leader 1: Let the Shofar call us to Yom Kippur.

Leader 1 & All: **And let us say together:**
 May my heart and mind be open to what this day asks of me.

Leader 1: Tonight, wherever Jews are,
 the sound of the Shofar echoes.
 It calls to our hearts, to our minds,
 and to our souls.

Congregation: *It is a stirring sound, alerting us to the tasks at hand.*

Leader 2: First, the Shofar says: *Sh'ma* – Hear! Be Still!
This is a day when we should seek out quiet;
this is a day when we are given a still place,
a place kept apart from our busy days.
This is a day when our true self is within reach.

Leader 2: Next, the Shofar says: *Sh'ma* – Hear! Pay Attention!
On this day we take responsibility for our future.

Congregation: *At this time of responsibility, let me pay attention.*

Leader 2: Pay heed: to the sound of the Shofar on Yom Kippur Day.
Pay heed: this is a day to bring your spirit to touch the world,
a day to declare responsibility for your life.

Congregation: *When I pay attention, I bear witness;
When I bear witness, I take part in judgment.*

Leader 2: Finally, the Shofar says: *Sh'ma* – Hear! Return!
The sages said: *Yat-zah*, the going forth, is simple;
T'shuvah, the returning, is difficult.

Each year, we begin with a clean, bright new moment.
By the time the year ends, threads of memory and desire
have wrapped around us and trapped us in their complex webs.
What we began with is long lost as our year ends;
the sparks of that first bursting moment of light
have been scattered throughout the moments of our lives.

Leader 1: Let us be still within when the Shofar sounds.
Breathe of the spirit of our coming together.
Breathe deeply of being at one with ourselves
and of sharing the spirit of this time.

Leader 1 & Congregation: **And let us say together:**
*In the stillness between each call,
Let each breath bring me back to myself,
Ready for the year which these moments begin.*

Song Leader & Shofar:

T'kee-ah!	תקיעה !
She-va-reem!	שברים !
Te-roo-ah!	תרועה !
T'kee-ah!	תקיעה !

Piano & Cello: **From Jewish Life: Prayer** (Ernest Bloch)

Leader 1: Together, let us affirm the values that guide us as we strive for renewal in the year to come.

Leader 1 & All: **Please say with me:**
*Loving life
and its mysterious source
with all our heart
and all our spirit,
all our senses and strength,
we take upon ourselves
and into ourselves these promises:
to care for the earth
and those who live upon it,
to pursue justice and peace,
to love kindness and compassion.*

*We will teach this to our children
throughout the passage of the day
as we dwell in our homes
and as we go on our journeys,
from the time we rise
until the time we fall asleep.*

*And may our actions
be faithful to our words
that our children's children
may live to know:
Truth and kindness
have embraced,
peace and justice have kissed
and are one.*

(Marcia Falk, adapted)

**Song Leader
& Congregation:** **Sachki, Sachki**

*Sach-ki, sach-ki, al ha-chlo-mot
Zu ah-ni ha-cho-lem sach
Sach-ki ki v'--a-dam a-a-min,
Ki o-deh-ni ma-a-min bach.
Sach-ki ki v'--a-dam a-min
Ki o-deh-ni ma-a-min bach.*

*Laugh at all my dreams, my dearest
Laugh and I repeat anew
That I still believe in people
As I still believe in you.
That I still believe in people
As I still believe in you.*

*For my soul is not yet sold
To the golden calf of scorn
And I still believe in people*

*And the spirit in us born.
And I still believe in people
And the spirit in us born.*

*Let the time be dark with hatred
I believe in years beyond
Love at last shall bind the people
In an everlasting bond.
Love at last shall bind the people
In an everlasting bond.*

*Laugh at all my dreams, my dearest
Laugh and I repeat anew
That I still believe in people
As I still believe in you.
That I still believe in people
As I still believe in you.*

*(Laugh at All My Dreams,
Music, T. Shlonsky; Lyrics, Shaul Tchernichovsky)*

II. CANDLE LIGHTING

[When Yom Kippur falls on Shabbat, begin the Candle Lighting ceremony here:]

Leader 2: Tonight we celebrate both Yom Kippur and Shabbat. May the flames of these Sabbath lights brighten our paths and help us see the good we can do.

[Shabbat candles are lit]

**Song Leader &
Congregation:** **Mah Yafeh Hayom**

*Mah yafeh hayom, shabbat shalom. (repeat)
Shabbat, shabbat shalom (repeat 3 times)
Shabbat, shalom.*

(How beautiful is the Sabbath day, Sabbath peace.)

[If Yom Kippur and Shabbat do not coincide, begin the Candle Lighting ceremony here:]

Leader 1: A candle's flame is a wondrous and mysterious thing. Though frail and easily extinguished, it has the power to light the darkness. A single candle flame can cast light where none has been. Its rays can penetrate to hidden corners.

Leader 2: We might be compared to a flame in our fragility. Our physical power is slight. Yet a single act of human kindness or love illuminates like the candle's flame.

We change the world through the action of individuals. I must ask myself what I can do, what actions I can take to make this a better world for all humankind.

Leader 1: Now, at the beginning of the New Year, let us resolve to seek wisdom and understanding, courage and compassion; and may we have the will to let them guide our ways. Let this fire we kindle be for us a warming flame, whose brightness shows us the path of life.

[Music and Silent Reflection as the Humanorah is lit]

Leader 2 & All: *Radiant is the light in the world.
Radiant is the light within each of us.
Radiant is the light of life.*

**Song Leader
& Congregation:** **Let Us Light These Lights**

*Let us light these lights
And see the way to joy,
And let us say sim-cha. (repeat)*

*Let us light these lights
And see the way to love,
And let us say a-ha-va. (repeat)*

*Let us light these lights
And see the way to peace,
And let us say shalom. (repeat)
(Music, Debbie Friedman; Lyrics adapted by Rabbi Daniel Friedman)*

III. KOL NIDRE

Leader 2: At this most solemn time in the Jewish calendar, we assemble to listen to Kol Nidre. The words of this ancient invocation, still recited in its original Aramaic, are barely understood, their precise meaning unclear even to modern scholars. The purpose of the prayer and to whom it was addressed remains to this day a mystery. Yet its haunting melody and the atmosphere of expectation, hope, and release that it brings cannot be denied. As we listen to Kol Nidre, let its sound reach to the center of our beings; let its melody sink to the depth of our souls.

Cello & Piano ***Kol Nidre*** (Max Bruch)

Reader 1: Above the mournful chanting,
Rise the fuller-sounded wailing
Of the soul's most solemn anthem.
Hark! the strains of deep Kol Nidre—
Saddest music ever mortals
Taught their lips to hymn or sound.

Reader 2: Who has ever heard Kol Nidre
Gushing from the human breast,
Rising, falling, as the ocean
Lifts the waves in joy or fear.

From time's ocean has it risen;
Every age has lent a murmur,
Every cycle built a wall;
Every sorrow ever dwelling
In the tortured human heart,
Tears and sighs together swelling,
Answer for the pangs of the ages.

Reader 1: Who can hear this strange Kol Nidre
Without dropping in the spell?
Lift the vestige of the present,
Link the momentary fleeting
Of the evening with the past;

Dwell a spirit in the ages,
Living in the heart of time:
Lose the sense of outer worlds,
Soul alone in endless time,
Breathing but the breath of ages.

(Joseph Leiser, adapted)

Leader 2: In listening to the Kol Nidre melody, we experience in our innermost hearts
the torment of our disappointments and losses, our broken vows and
resolutions. It is a reminder of the distance between what we are and what
we wish to be.

To change things in the world, we must understand the limits of the world;
to change things in ourselves, we must know our own limits.

Leader 1: Which of our aspirations are unrealistic?
Which of our promises cannot be fulfilled?
Let us remove our commitment from that
which no longer nourishes our soul.
Let us give our energy and our will to those deeds that will help fulfill us,
and that will help the human race to thrive and survive.

Leader 2: The ancient prayer of Kol Nidre at the heart of Yom Kippur is also at the heart of our humanism. It is not about punishment for vows broken, but about our fallible humanity.

Our ancestors understood that we needed escape clauses—especially for contracts between oneself and one's own soul. Our ancestors knew that a person might vow that which could not be performed; might promise that which could not be fulfilled; might, with all good intentions, make an oath which could not be kept.

Leader 1: Judaism recognizes our humanity in our capacity for error, and in our willingness to forgive the errors of others and to correct our own mistakes.

Who among us has never been in error?

Because we recognize our own limitations, we can feel compassion for all people. Because we recognize our own fallibility, we can feel connection with all people. In that compassion and that connection lies our strength.

Leader 2: **Let us all first say, following the ancient tradition:**

**Leader 2
& Congregation:**

*I hereby forgive whoever has hurt me,
Whoever has done me any wrong,
Whether deliberately or by accident,
Whether by word or by deed.
May no one be punished on my account.*

*As I forgive and pardon fully
Those who have wronged me,
I shall seek out those whom I have harmed
And ask them to forgive and pardon me
Whether I acted deliberately or inadvertently,
Whether by word or by deed.
May I not willfully repeat
The wrongs I have committed.*

*May justice rule the world,
Bringing joy to the land, happiness to the nation,
And renewed strength and light to our people.
(Joseph Leiser)*

Leader 1: **In honor of the ancient tradition, please stand if able and recite:**

**Leader 1
& Congregation:**

*All forms of vows, oaths and bonds
Which I have uttered, taken, or bound myself to
From the last Day of Atonement unto this present Day of Atonement,
Which is now come unto us for peace,
May those of my vows between my soul and myself
Be no longer deemed as vows,*

*My oaths as oaths, nor my bonds as binding.
Be they all null and void;
They shall not bind, nor shall they stand.*

**Leader 1
& Congregation:** **And let us now add:**
*The vows I made after the last Atonement Day
The oaths in my heart
I declared for my good:
Have I fulfilled them?
Have they changed my way of life?
Have they delivered me from error?*

[Silent Reflection, with music]

Leader 2: Have we erred against life either willingly or unwillingly, knowingly or unknowingly?

Congregation: *Have we blocked our ears to the cries of children?*

Leader 2: Have we closed our eyes to the desolation of earth's creatures?

Congregation: *Have we exploited the earth without thought for the future?*

Leader 2: Have we been silent while wrongdoing succeeds?

Congregation: *Have we refused to acknowledge our responsibility?
Have we said, "I'm only one person, how can I matter?"*

Leader 1: Honest appraisal and renewed commitment can reclaim truth, set right the world, and assure for our children a life of purpose and peace.

**Leader 1:
& Congregation:** **Let us say together:**
*Who will hear my regret?
Who will open my prison
And release me from habit?
To whom can I raise my voice?*

*I make the vows,
I am the listener;
My own voice is heard
By my own soul.*

Leader 1: Let us be silent for a few moments to reflect upon our vows. Which shall we keep? Which shall we discard?

[Silent Reflection, with music]

Reader 3: Always we hope
 someone else has the answer.
 Some other place will be better.
 Some other time
 it will turn out.

This is it.
 No one else has the answer.
 No other place will be better,
 and it has already turned out.

At the center of your being you have the answer;
 you know who you are and you know what you want.

There is no need
 to run outside
 for better seeing.

Nor to peer from a window.

Rather abide at
 the center of your being;
 for the more you leave it
 the less you learn.

Search your heart
 and see
 the way to do
 is to be. *(Lao Tzu)*

IV. TORAH CEREMONY

Song Leader: Let the Shofar call us to the Torah.

**Song Leader
& Shofar:** T'kee-ah! תקיעה !

Leader 1: For over two and one-half millennia, the Torah, or Five Books of Moses, has been the keystone of Jewish life, the starting point of Christianity, and the background of Islam. Through the Torah we glimpse the experience of our own ancient family: their customs and laws; their mistakes and achievements; their understanding of the world at that moment in time. Although many centuries separate us from the events and beliefs of our ancestors, there is wisdom to be gleaned from their stories and inspiration from their courage.

For ceremonial purposes, Jews have continued to read from handwritten parchment Torahs in scroll form, housed in arks. Our congregation has such a scroll, a Torah from Czechoslovakia, salvaged from the Holocaust. We feel honored to have this Torah as a permanent loan from a London synagogue that restores and conserves such precious relics.

**Leader 1 &
Congregation:**

We say together:

With Jews the world over, we read tonight to honor tradition and to connect us to the ancient Jewish text.

Leader 1:

Please stand as the Torah is removed from the ark.

[Music]

Leader 1:

Please be seated and enjoy listening to this evening's reading. As Jewish Humanists we are comfortable in freely interpreting the text, looking beyond the literal message for truths and insights that speak to us today. At times we may venture beyond the five books of the Torah, seeking wisdom from other books of the Hebrew Bible.

Tonight we will hear a passage from _____, followed by a commentary.

[Readings]

Leader 1:

Please stand as the Torah is returned to the ark.

[Music]

Leader 1:

Please be seated.

[Commentary]

V. THE MEANING OF YOM KIPPUR

Leader 2:

On Rosh Hashanah, we are called to be conscious of how we were in the year past; on Yom Kippur, we are called to be conscious of how we may be in the year to come.

When we are young, we learn by seeing things as separate.
As we grow, we learn to put things together.
We try to make unities, to see patterns;
to see beneath and beyond separate experience
to the unbroken wholeness of which everything is a form.

Leader 1:

At the center of the Jewish virtue of *Menschlichkeit*—of humaneness—is this Jewish humanistic vision of wholeness. We are *menschlich* when we can see more than what is in front of our eyes, when we can see beyond what is separate and of the moment, when we can see all the pieces, together. We are *menschlich* when we see our own lives as part of what is true of all of human experience.

For us as Humanist Jews, the focus of Yom Kippur is not so much atonement as “at-one-ment,” a time when we strive to return to being at one with our values, our ideals. It is a time not only to understand our values but to incorporate them into our lives.

Leader 2:

The Hebrew word *t’shu-vah* means “return” as well as repentance. In this quiet hour, we reflect on the meaning of our lives. Each of us harbors within a vision of our highest self, a dream of what we are and could become. May we pursue this vision and work to make this dream real.

T’fee-lah means “self-reflection” in addition to prayer. On this day, we turn our gaze inward. Within we find the power and strength to learn from our personal past and to plan for the future.

Tze-da-kah, the Hebrew word for justice or righteousness, also signifies “charity.” Only when our self-reflection leads to meaningful action in the world do we fulfill ourselves. Our families, our community, the Jewish people, the totality of existence—they shall be the soil in which we plant the seed of our renewed vision. *Tze-da-kah* is the right action that results from self-reflection.

Leader 1:

Turning within, self-reflection and right action are the fruits of this day. In the light of love and the warmth of this community we gather to seek, to sustain, to share.

Let us then be mindful of the time. For, as Hillel said, “If not now, when?”

**Song Leader
& Congregation:**

Eem Ayn Anee Lee

Eem ayn a-nee lee, mee lee?

Uo-kh’- she-a-nee l’ats – mee mah a –nee?

Eem lo akh-shav

Ey-ma-tie? Ey-ma-tie?

Lai lai lai, lai lai lai...

(Adapted from Hillel, 1st century Jewish scholar)

(If I am not for myself, who is for me?

If I am only for myself, what am I?

If not now, when?)

VI. NIZ-KOR – We Remember

Leader 1:

Niz-kor, the remembrance of our dead, began as a collective experience. It originated with a massacre of Jews in the Rhine Valley during the Crusades and continued for 250 years through the pogroms and during the Black Death. In those times, the ceremony consisted of reading aloud the names of all the victims who had died at the hands of the Crusaders or mobs, or in mass suicides to avoid forced conversions.

The memorial books eventually contained thousands of names. If we were to add the names of all victims of hatred and racism in our own time, they would number tens of millions and would include people from every corner of the earth. We light this candle then, not only in memory of our own beloved, but of all those who have been robbed of their descendants and have no one else to remember them.

[Memorial candle is lit]

Leader 2: We remember now,
Those with whom we shared,
Those that gave us strength,
Those we cherished,
Those we loved.
We remember them at daybreak
As the sun peeks over the distant horizon.

Congregation: *We remember them at dusk,
When vision is difficult and shapes are poorly defined.*

Leader 2: We remember them at the first signs of spring,
As the first blossoms bloom.

Congregation: *We remember them in the stillness of winter,
As the stark branches are set against a cold winter sky.*

Leader 2: We remember them when we are alone,
And afraid of tomorrow.

Congregation: *We remember them at times of joy,
Wishing to share with them once more.*

Leader 2: We remember them at times of difficulty,
Waiting for advice that does not come.

Congregation: *We remember them always,
For they are part of us now.*

Leader 2: In this temporal world, let us memorialize the good, the just, the caring.
Let us honor the healers, the builders, the dreamers.

In this temporal world, let us remember the peacemakers, those who taught, those who nurtured, those who loved, those who shared, those who identified with humankind, those who created for humanity.

**Leader 2
& Congregation:** **And let us join in saying:**
*Such as these will live on in the land of the living
Even after they have left us.
So it has always been and so it will always be.*

[Silent Reflection, with music]

Reader 4: There are so many dead buried in my heart,
I can no longer keep track of them all,
and they can pull me ever harder toward them.
The dead are never dead;
We keep talking to them
and they keep talking to us.

(J.A. Amato)

Leader 1: May our bereavement for loved ones who are no longer with us expand our compassion for all of life. May we pursue peace among the living. May we find inner peace, Shalom, in the acceptance of our loss, cherishing the memories of companionship which shall endure.

**Leader 1
& Congregation:** **Together we say:**
May our community be a source of sustenance and support to all who mourn.

VII. CLOSING

Reader 5: Upon the Jews and upon all the nations
And upon all the disciples of truth

Reader 6: To them and to you
For the New Year – Peace.

Reader 5: Upon the Jews and upon all
Who meet with unfriendly glances,
Sticks and stones and names
On posters, in newspapers, in books,
Curses chalked on walls and highways;
Children who are pushed out of classrooms,
Whom the hundred hands of the mob strike.

Reader 6: To them and to you,
In this place and in every place,
For the New Year – Safety.

Reader 5: Upon the Jews and upon all who live
As the sparrows of the streets,
Under the cornices of the houses of others,
As rabbits in the fields of strangers
Or on the grace of what the harvesters leave.

Reader 6: In this place and in every place
To them and to you,
For the New Year – a Living.

Reader 5: Upon the Jews and upon the nations,
Upon the children of the world
And upon the children of their children,

Reader 6: In this place and in every place,
To them and to you,
For the New Year and for every year – Life.
(Charles Reznikoff, adapted)

Leader 1: The task is difficult. It is difficult to slow down, to be still, to listen to our inner self. Yet, on Yom Kippur, we are asked to accept the hard tasks of self-investigation, of self-judgment, and of choosing the proper actions that will help us to grow in the fresh spirit of the year to come.

Leader 2: Turn unto yourself,
And you shall be turned,
And your days renewed.

Like a sprinkling of clean water,
Like cool water to a dry mouth,
So shall we be clear and open,
And our days renewed.
(P. Markish)

Leader 1: How can we free ourselves?
Yom Kippur gives us space.
It is for us a sanctuary.

In the stillness of the sanctuary, we will find the vision
and the power to shake off what binds us. We must
avoid empty vows, empty commitments, empty promises.

Leader 2: If we lack self-awareness, our vows will be empty.
We must commit ourselves to deeds as well as to words.

**Leader 2
& Congregation:** **Together we say:**
I must sacrifice the comfort of what is familiar and blocks change.
I know what is right; let me act on that knowing.
The right action, or the way of error?
The decision is mine.

**Song Leader
& Shofar:** T'kee-ah! ! תקיעה

Leader 2: The days of reflection are ending. The time to commit is now. As the Shofar sounds tonight's final call, let us ready ourselves for a new beginning.

**Song Leader
& Shofar:** T'kee-ah! ! תקיעה
She-va-reem! ! שברים
Te-roo-ah! ! תרועה
T'kee-ah G'do-lah! ! תקיעה גדולה

Leader 2: May we live up to our resolve.
May peace and kindness,
Graciousness, goodness,
Compassion and integrity
Flow among us
And all the communities of Israel,
And all the peoples of the world.

**Song Leader
& Congregation:**

Hayamim Cholfim

*Hayamim cho-le-fim
Shana o-ve-ret
Hayamim cho-le-fim
Shana o-ve-ret
Aval ha-man-gee-nah
Aval ha-man-gee-nah
Aval ha-man-gee-nah
Le-o-lam nish-e-ret. (repeat all)
(Days pass, years go by, but the melody remains eternal)*

Leader 1: This concludes our Yom Kippur Kol Nidre service. For those who are fasting, we wish you an easy fast. Please join us tomorrow for our Yom Kippur Memorial and Closing service.

All: L'Shanah Tovah!

YOM KIPPUR

MEMORIAL & CLOSING



**CONGREGATION FOR HUMANISTIC JUDAISM
FAIRFIELD COUNTY, CONNECTICUT**

YOM KIPPUR MEMORIAL & CLOSING SERVICES

I. MEMORIAL SERVICE

[Music]

Leader 1: There are strains of music that evoke deep-rooted memories—historic memories from our collective past, personal memories of family and friends now gone, memories of a sweet or bittersweet childhood. The mournful melody draws us within ourselves and back in time. How can we draw solace and strength from our treasured memories? How do we find meaning in life in the face of inevitable death?

Leader 2: The spark of life burns brightly and then...the ineffable silence. No words can fill the void. There is no justice in death. So great is the pain; so unreasonable the emptiness, the dark despair.

Leader 1: Since time immemorial, in every culture, people have invented myths to dispel the darkness: myths of heaven, immortality, resurrection. But however we seek to explain it or make it palatable, death comes upon us unawares. We are not prepared to lose those whom we love.

Reader 1: “When will I be myself again?”
Some Tuesday, perhaps,
In the late afternoon,
Sitting quietly with a cup of tea
And a cookie;
Or Wednesday, same time or later,
You will stir from a nap and see him;
You will pick up the phone to call him;
You will hear his voice – unexpected advice –
And maybe argue.
And you will not be frightened,
And you will not be sad,
And you will not be alone,
Not alone at all,
And your tears will warm you.
But not today,
And not tomorrow,
And not tomorrow’s tomorrow,
But some day,
Some Tuesday, late in the afternoon,
Sitting quietly with a cup of tea
And a cookie
And you will be yourself again.
(Rabbi Lewis John Eron)

[Music and Silent Reflection]

Leader 1: We each live with our memories. We cannot escape them. They grow to be a part of us. Good memories comfort us with pleasant nostalgia. A word, a melody, a flavor or scent can evoke the warmth of family, good times with friends, bright moments of joy. Bad memories assault us with ancient pain and long-ago fears. Times when we were lonely or frightened can rise up to disturb us anew.

Leader 2: It is human to remember. Because we remember, we have culture. Because we remember, we have tradition. Because we remember, we are able to learn from the past and create a better future.

The vocabulary of Jewish life is rich with remembrance. Holidays and festivals commemorate ancient events. The past is treasured as a precious legacy, to be studied and understood, revered and celebrated. Yet this same cherished past includes centuries of persecution, tyranny, and destruction. *Ha Shoah*, the pivotal event of the 20th century, was so tragic in its dimensions, so enormous in its cruelty, that some would prefer to bury it beyond recollection. Some would even deny its reality. Today, when we would become at one with our past, we remember *Ha Shoah*, the Holocaust that engulfed six million of our people and millions of others in a conflagration unprecedented in history.

Leader 2 & Congregation: **Let us say together:**
We shall not forget, because, we, the living, are all survivors of the Holocaust. We are heirs to the ultimate horror of Ha Shoah.

Leader 1: Neither shall we forget the unspeakable tragedies that continue to unfold, whether on distant shores or closer to home. We mourn the victims of Covid and other worldwide pandemics. We acknowledge the ravages of climate change and famine, and the displacement of millions of refugees. We oppose racism in all its forms and dedicate ourselves to ensuring the value of all humankind.

[Music and Silent Reflection]

Leader 1: There is no adequate memorial for the dead; indeed, memorials are more often for the living. They give us a chance to remember loved ones with unabashed tears. A time to recall a story, repeat a gesture. A time to reaffirm a love.

Parents and peers, family and friends, are forever joined to us by bonds of affection and shared experience. The pain of separation never completely disappears, but neither does the fond memory of their lives. They are constantly with us, even when we do not think of them.

Reader 2: They are not dead who live in hearts they leave behind.
In those whom they have blessed, they live a life again,
and shall live through the years eternal life,
and shall grow each day more beautiful,
as time declares their good,
forgets the rest,
and proves their immortality.

(Hugh Robert Orr, adapted)

Reader 2 &: Let us say together:

Congregation: *The memory of those I loved in life and still love in death blesses my thoughts and my actions. The special grace of their years reaches out to touch my heart and give me hope.*

Song Leader

& Congregation: L'dor Vador

*We are gifts and we are blessings, we are history in song.
We are hope and we are healing, we are learning to be strong.
We are words, and we are stories, we are pictures of the past.
We are carriers of wisdom, not the first and not the last.*

*L'dor vador, with love eternal
L'dor vador, we protect this chain.
From generation to generation,
L'dor vador, these hearts will tend the flame. (repeat)
(From Generation to Generation, Music and Lyrics, Josh Nelson, adapted)*

Leader 2: On this day, when we are flooded with unaccustomed and powerful emotions, let us honor the memory of our loved ones in the way most consistent with our beliefs—and our hearts.

Let us stand if able and together read our Humanistic Remembrance. Then those who wish to recite the Mourner's Kaddish may do so.

Leader 2 & Congregation, responsively:

Leader 2: Those who taught us to laugh and to cry,
We remember them.

Leader 2: Those who held us and whom we held,
We remember them.

Leader 2: At the rising of the sun and at its going down,
We remember them.

Leader 2: In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of winter,
We remember them.

Leader 2: At the opening of buds and in the rebirth of spring,
At the blueness of the sky and in the warmth of summer,
At the rustling of leaves and in the beauty of autumn,
We remember them.

Leader 2: When we are weary and in need of strength,
When we are lost and sick at heart,
When we face decisions that are difficult to make,
We remember them.

Leader 2: When we seek advice that does not come,
When we are alone and afraid,
When we have joys we yearn to share,
We remember them.

Leader 2: **Join us as we say:**
So long as we live, they too shall live.
For they are now a part of us,
As we remember them.
(Rabbis Sylvan Kamens and Jack Riemer, adapted)

Leader 1: The traditional Mourner's Kaddish, an ancient verse written in Aramaic, extols the greatness of God and the majesty of creation. As a theological prayer, its sentiments are inconsistent with our humanistic liturgy. Nonetheless, for many people the mournful chant evokes thoughts of loved ones who wished to be remembered and honored in this way. Please continue to stand while those who wish to recite the Kaddish do so now.

Mourner's Kaddish

Yit-ga-dal ve-yit-ka-dash she-may ra-ba. Be-al-ma dee-vrah khee-roo-tay. Ve-yam-lich mal-khoo-tay. Be-kha-yay-khan oo-ve-yo-may-khon oo-ve-kha-yay de-khol bayt Yis-ra-e-el ba-aga-la oo-viz-man ka-reev. V-im-roo: A-mayn.

Y-hay she-may rah-ba me-va-rakh le-olam oo-le-al-may al-ma-ya. Yit-ba-rakh ve-yish-ta-bakh, ve-yit-pa-ar ve-yit-ro-man ve-yit-na-say, Ve-yit-hadar ve-yit-a-lay ve-yit-ha-la she-may de-koo-de-sha.

Be-rikh hoo Le-ay-la meen kol bir-kha-ta ve-shee-ra-ta.
Toosh-be-kha-ta ve-ne-khe-ma-ta da-a-mee-ran be-alma
Ve-eem-roo: Amayn

Ye-hay shla-ma ra-ba meen sha-ma-ya ve-kha-yeem
Alehnu ve-al kol Yis-ra-el ve-eem-roo: Amayn
O-seh shalom bim-ro-mav, hoo ya-a-aseh shalom a-layn-noo ve-al-kol-Yisrael.
Ve-eem-roo: A-mayn

Please be seated.

Leader 1: It is tradition to remember those in our congregation who have passed away since the last High Holidays.

[Memorials are read]

Leader 1: We now invite those who have lost a loved one in the past year to come forward and light a yahrzeit candle.

Leader 1: We now light a memorial candle for all who lost their lives so that others might live in freedom and peace.

[Candle is lit]

**Song Leader &
Congregation: Yesh Koghavim**

*There are stars up above
So far away we only see their light
Long, long after the star itself is gone.*

*And so it is with people that we loved,
Their memories keep shining
Ever brightly though their time with us is done.
But the stars that light up the darkest night:
These are the lights that guide us.*

*As we live our days, these are the ways
We remember, we remember. (repeat)*

*Yeysh ko·kha·vim
She·o·ram ma·gee·ahar·tzah,
Rakka·a·sher^[SEP]
Hematz·mamav·duv·ey·nam.*

*Yeysh a-na-sheem she-zeev
Mey·eer zikh·ram
Ka·a·sher hey'm atz-mam ay·nam
Od b·to·khey·e-e-e-ey·nu*

*O·rot ey·leh ha·mav·hee·keem
B·khesh·kat ha·la·yeel*

*Heym, hey'm she·mar·eem l·a·dam
Et ha·de·rek'h, et ha·de·rek'h. (repeat)*

*As we live our days, these are the ways
We remember, we remember. (repeat)*

*(There Are Stars, based on a poem by Hannah Senesh;
Music & English Lyrics, Jeff Klepper & Daniel Freeland)*

Song Leader: The sound of your voice, the touch of your hand.
Memories shared, perhaps in silence.
These moments I shall remember.

PERSONAL REMEMBRANCES

Leader 1: It is our practice at this point in the service to read aloud the remembrances of members who wish to honor the memory of those dear to them.

[Remembrances are read]

Leader 1 & **Let us now say together:**

Congregation: *May our grief for loved ones who are no longer with us lead to an expansion of our compassion for all of life and of our passion for wonder in our relationships. May we pursue peace among the living. May we find inner peace, Shalom, in the acceptance of our loss, cherishing the memories of companionship which shall endure. May this community be a source of sustenance and support to all who mourn.*

[Music and Silent Reading]

In a garden I once heard
A song or an ancient blessing
And above the dark trees
An eternal window is lit
To the memory of the face
That once looked out of it
Which too was in remembrance
Of yet another window lit.

(Yehuda Amichai)

II. CLOSING SERVICE

Leader 2: The day is fading. Soon it will be dark. The silence and peace of night will descend upon the earth. And the tranquility of night will yield to the vitality of day—a new day in a new year. As these hours of reflection and introspection draw to a close, we will return to the tasks and problems, the challenges and the joys, of life.

None of us can know our destiny. Will the year bring health or illness, peace or war, success or failure? Our future is a secret that only time will disclose. Many of the forces that determine our lives are beyond our control.

Leader 1: Yet much of who we are and what we do is ultimately in our hands. We have the freedom and the responsibility to make our own choices in life and to find our own meaning. Philosopher and Holocaust survivor Viktor Frankl tells us, “Everything can be taken from a man but one thing, the last of the human freedoms—to choose one’s attitude in any given set of circumstances, to choose one’s own way.”

We can allow ourselves to be buffeted by circumstance and abdicate the responsibility for living. Or we can pursue the adventure of personal fulfillment with all the inner resources at our command.

Leader 2: In this New Year we have the opportunity to begin anew. What does it take for us to grasp it? When Rebbe Nachman, the famed 18th century Chasid, was approached by a young man complaining how hard it was to change his ways, the Rebbe asked, “But do you really *want* to want?”

Let us “want to want”—to embrace our truest selves, to embrace community, to embrace life, with all its risks and uncertainties.

How often are we given the opportunity for self-renewal—and ignore it?

Reader 3: Sometimes
Out of the corner
Of my eye
I get a glimpse
Of my life.

In a flash
In a moment –
Over there –
I see it clearly.

Quickly then,
I make a shopping list
Or rent a video.
Quickly, I look away. (Merle Feld)

Leader 2: Yom Kippur is not for looking away. It is for looking inward, for looking at ourselves intensely and acknowledging the most profound truths of our lives. As Humanists, we know that it is up to us to check the recesses of our hearts, to know the true way of moral action by which to judge what we find there, and to act on our own determination without desire for reward or fear of retribution from a supreme being.

Leader 1: This is what we ask of ourselves: to act justly and compassionately and to walk proudly with one another. Cultivate these qualities in yourself, and they will become real.

Cultivate these in your family, and they will abound.
Cultivate them in your community, and they will grow.

Leader 2: Cultivate them throughout the world, and we will make strides toward world peace. As the Universalist hymn says, "Let there be peace on earth and let it begin with me."

**Song Leader &
Congregation: Na-a-se Shalom**

*Na-a-se sha-lom ba-o-lam
Na-a-se sha-lom a-ley-nu.
V'al kol ha-o-lam
V'im-ru, im ru sha-lom.*

*Na-a-se sha-lom
Na-a-se sha-lom
Sha-lom a-ley-nu,
V'al kol ha-o-lam.*

*Na-a-se sha-lom
Na-a-se shal-lom
Sha-lom a-ley-nu,
V'al kol ha-o-lam.*

(Let us bring peace upon ourselves and upon all the world. Music, Nurit Hirsch)

Leader 2: Our tradition encourages us to change. Indeed, it demands that we strive for our truest selves. In Deuteronomy, we are told, "I have put before you life and death, blessings and curses. Choose life." (30:19)

Leader 1: Take heed. Choose life! Begin anew!

It is time to embrace change. Change—whether in our families, our workplaces, our communities, our environment, our nation, our world—must begin with ourselves.

Leader 1 & Congregation: **Let us say together:**

*We shall not shrink from the task because it seems daunting.
It is daunting.*

*We shall not shrink from the task because we fear failure.
We may fail.*

Success is uncertain. But we must begin.

Reader 4 & Congregation: If I could speak

the thin clear vein of thought
that is all entwined in webbing
left from long lack of honesty,
*I would speak now,
before the sun goes down.*

If I could cry
the lakes of tears
to feed the thirsty nations
warring when the world
is ripe for working,
*I would cry now,
before the sun goes down.*

If I could grow a thousand arms
to wind beneath the earth
and find a thousand arms to
hold dignity,
*I would grow now,
before the sun goes down.*

If I could climb
a cliff and echo love
inside the chasm where
bullets echo back at me,
*I would climb now,
before the sun goes down.*

If I could know
of courage,
(the child born from hearing
one's own sound and knowing it to be true),
*I would know courage now,
before the sun goes down.* (Fanchon Shur, adapted)

Leader 1: In the days and weeks ahead, let us strive to live fully and well. Let us not forsake the insights we have struggled to gain during these days of reflection. Soon the Shofar's call will mark the passing of the old year, and we will prepare to greet the year to come.

Let us be grateful, as we break our Yom Kippur fast, to all who have helped bring food and drink to our table. We vow to respond in turn to those in need.

Leader 2: We celebrate the fruit of the vine and the bounty of nature as we lift this cup. Wine is a symbol of the wholeness of life, reminding us that life is both joy and sorrow. We accept them both, and so, all that life offers.

Leader 1: We celebrate nature, source of all nourishment,
Which brings forth bread from the earth.
May we protect the bountiful earth
That it may continue to nurture us.
And let us seek fulfillment
For all who dwell in the world.

In the year to come, may we find strength and serenity, the joy of fulfillment, and the sweetness of love.

And let us say together:

May our hearts be open with generosity and our hands ready with kindness. May the day soon come when all humanity walks as one.

Song Leader

& Shofar: T'kee-ah! ! תקיעה
She-va-reem! ! שברים
Te-roo-ah! ! תרועה
T'kee-ah G'do-lah! ! תקיעה גדולה

Leader 2: L'Shanah Tovah! May we look forward to a year of goodness, joy, health, and sustenance.

Congregation: *For all people of good will, we wish happiness and peace.*
L'Shanah Tovah!

Leader 2: As this Yom Kippur day draws to a close, we'd like to sing a song written by John Franklin, one of the founders of our congregation. It's called "Another Year Begins." We'll follow it with "Hevenu Shalom Alechem."

**Song leader
& All:**

Another Year Begins

*Another year begins
And since we've come this far
Let's take someone else's hand
And do everything we can
To make the most of who we are.*

*Another year begins
And since we've come this far
Let's take someone else's hand
And do everything we can
To make the most of who we are.*

(Music & Lyrics, John Franklin)

**Song leader
& All:**

Hevenu Shalom Alechem

*Hevenu shalom alechem
Hevenu shalom alechem*

*Hevenu shalom alechem
Hevenu shalom, shalom
Shalom alechem. (repeat all)
(We bring peace to you.)*

Leader 1

This concludes our High Holiday observances. We wish you health, happiness, and peace in the year to come.

L'Shanah Tovah!



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