



High Holidays

5782
at



August 26, 2021
18 Elul 5781

High Holiday Update

Three Ways to Participate

Indoors

All high holiday services (except the outdoor Ne'ilah Yom Kippur service) will be held indoors. Masks required at all times, social distancing encouraged, no tickets or pre-registration required. All snacking and schmoozing will take place in the Susan T. Goldberg Courtyard.

Livestream

All high holiday services will be livestreamed on Youtube. If you will be participating from home and would like to borrow a machzor, please [let us know](#).

Outdoors

During Rosh Hashanah, we invite you to join us for Tashlich at Jewel Falls. On Yom Kippur, audio for all services (including Kol Nidre) will be played in the Susan T. Goldberg Courtyard for those who would like to be at the synagogue to experience Yom Kippur services but would prefer to remain outdoors. Ne'ilah, the final service of Yom Kippur, will be held entirely outdoors. Additionally all children's services will be held exclusively outdoors.

High Holiday services at Temple Beth El are always free and open to all.

We hope that you will join us!
Read on for more details or visit tbemaine.org/high-holidays.

From Rabbi Braun



Preparing for the holidays is feeling challenging these days. First of all, while I understand that they



-Rabbi Carolyn Braun

are “on time,” they are also “way early!” Rosh Hashanah is on Labor Day? You’ve got to be kidding! Not only are they “early,” but once again, we find ourselves transitioning into the school year and the fall, and at the same time transitioning into

a kind of in-between space with regards to COVID. Last year, expecting that we might be socially distanced for a while, my messages were meant to say that though life had changed, at least we were banding together. I thought that we would come out of this, at least mostly intact, having found new strength in ourselves and in one another. This year, I had planned to talk about moving towards “normal,” or the way things were when the world and her experiences were open to us. Mostly, I wanted to reflect on being mindful of what our lives were like before COVID-19, what has changed, and what we would want to retain in a post COVID world. I wanted to encourage us to embrace some of the changes we made during our isolation. For example, perhaps your life has slowed down to a certain extent, and downtime is something you want to hold close. Perhaps you have been more aware of nature, and the ever changing cycle of plants and birds. Maybe you’ve strengthened some relationships, or let go of others and it has felt right. I wanted us to take time to reflect and be a little more aware of our ability to embrace a less frenetic life, as well as our amazing ability to adapt to new situations. Then “delta variant” and “boosters” entered our vocabulary, even while we anxiously awaited the vaccination of children under 12. So now we find ourselves here, again, thinking on our feet. What is the best way for us to join together, to celebrate, to learn, and to entertain? How can we include those who cannot be vaccinated, specifically those kids under 12? It turns out, there is no time to look back and reflect right now; we just need stay in the present and hope that our choices are right.

In life, I suppose, this is not always a bad approach: stay in the present and make the best decisions we can. Though it does contradict the “those who don’t know history are doomed to repeat it” approach, after reflecting on the past, focusing on the present is where we must put our minds. And I will be the first to say that it is not as easy as one might think. I am constantly working on staying in the present, noticing what is in front of me, and making decisions based on what I know, not what I worry might happen. To stay in the present, I try to remember to say blessings for my food, for the weather, for seeing and experiencing new things. Even with these good intentions, I too often forget to be mindful of everything happening around me, and merely take things for granted. Or, if I’m upset with the present, too often I can fall into yearning for the past, a place that conveniently can be seen with rose-colored glasses.

This year, we are in a strange and transitional space as we approach the High Holidays. We are neither “here,” nor “there.” Our synagogue grounds are all ready to greet you. The gardens are flourishing and beautiful, the new chairs and floor of the sanctuary enhance a space that is open and bright and flexible and welcoming. The courtyard is stunning. We are so blessed to have so many new members from different places, different backgrounds, and different ages. And yet, we realize that not everyone feels comfortable inside and in-person, and, further, not everyone will feel comfortable in a crowd. That is why we will be live-streaming all sanctuary services, and why we have so many resources on our High Holiday section of our (new!) website.

What I ask of you: celebrate the holidays in a way that you feel comfortable, doing what you feel is right for yourself and for your family. While our COVID committee feels comfortable with the present policy, we also know that life can change on a dime and, similar to last year, we will pivot to completely online if we have to. In light of recent events, we have altered family programming slightly to provide the safest, most accessible programming for kids under vaccination age: instead of meeting in the sanctuary, we are now inviting families to meet at the TBE Kids’ Tent, where Morah Abby and the Rabbi will greet you. We have also cancelled second day Rosh Hashanah family services.

I will leave you with this: know your history and stay in the present. Give yourselves the opportunity to reflect on the past, and make changes that will improve your lives and the life of the earth. Stay in present; bless the wonders of creation, and love life - whatever it throws at us.

Shanah tova,
Rabbi Braun

Recent COVID-19-related Program Changes + Updates

Rabbi Braun, staff, and lay leaders are engaged in daily discussions about the rapidly changing conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic and how they may affect High Holiday services and events. Should TBE's Board of Directors decide to make any further changes to current plans or policies, those changes will be communicated promptly via email and on our [website](#).

Yom Kippur Courtyard Option

- In addition to indoor services and the livestream option, chairs will also be set up in the courtyard for all Yom Kippur services with speakers playing the service that is occurring inside. Masks will be optional, social distancing is encouraged.
- Ne'ilah (the final service of Yom Kippur) will be held entirely outdoors as previously planned.

Family Programming

- All family programming will occur exclusively outdoors in the TBE Kids' Tent, where Rabbi Braun and Morah Abby will greet families
- Children's Services will begin around 10am
- Rosh Hashanah II Children's Services have been *canceled*

Seating

- Spacers will be available to place on either side of you/your pod to ensure social distancing.

Food

- All food will be served in individual packages and may only be consumed outdoors.

Is TBE asking for proof of vaccination to attend High Holiday services?

As you know, TBE is requiring masks indoors at all services, including for the High Holidays, seeking to create a kehillah that is safe, respectful, and inclusive of everyone. Some of you have asked whether TBE intends to require proof of vaccination to attend indoor services, as some synagogues are doing. We do not. Vaccines are incredibly important, both on the individual level (they greatly reduce your risk of serious illness, hospitalization, and death) and on the community level (reducing the spread of disease). TBE strongly encourages all of our members to get vaccinated if you are not already. However, current data suggests that vaccinated individuals can transmit the Delta variant of coronavirus, if somewhat less than unvaccinated people. Additionally, requiring vaccination to enter the building would potentially exclude children under 12 (who are ineligible to be vaccinated) from attending services, or even entering the building to use the bathroom during children's services. Collecting vaccination information also presents privacy challenges and would be logistically difficult as we do not require advanced registration or tickets to attend services. Given all of these factors, along with the high rates of vaccination in our state and county, we believe that masks are our best tool for ensuring a safe indoor environment and reducing the risk of coronavirus spreading at shul.

Preparing for the Holidays

Reserve a Seat

Interested in reserving a specific seat(s) for services this year? This can be done by heading over to our website or calling the office at (207) 774-2649.

[Reserve a High Holiday Seat](#)

Sponsorships and Dedications

TBE's High Holiday services are accessible, secure and enjoyable thanks to donations from our High Holiday sponsors. A complete list of sponsorship opportunities can be found [here](#). Contact Kate Shalvoy at director@tbemaine.org to inquire.

Volunteers

Please let us know if you can help with any of the following needs:

Before Rosh Hashanah

- Help assembling the annual appeal card display
- Minor wall repair and painting in the lower lobby
- Silver polishing
- Attaching book racks to the sanctuary chairs
- Gardening
- Challah baking

During Holiday Services

- Ushers and Greeters. Click [here](#) or call 207-774-2649 to sign up for a shift!

Celebrating New Children During the Holidays

Did you welcome a child or grandchild into your family sometime between 2019 and now? Unfortunately, we are unable to schedule a COVID safe Birkat HaYaledim during the High Holidays this year, but we still want to acknowledge and celebrate this incredible *simcha*! Please send their name to office@tbemaine.org and we will add them to our list.

Maine Needs Mitzvah Project 5782

Maine Needs is a local organization that strives to help individuals and families in Maine meet their basic, material needs by providing donated clothing, hygiene products, household items, and other necessities. In 5782, **TBE has committed to donating 100 Cleaning and Toiletry kits**, which Maine Needs will distribute through social workers, educators, and others to families and individuals that need them. We will launch this effort at Rosh Hashanah and hope to reach our goal of 100 kits by Simchat Torah. Click [here](#) to learn more!

Order a Lulav and Etrog Set

Just as Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are early this year, so is Sukkot, which means lulav and etrog **orders must be placed by this Friday, August 27**. So place your order today!

Order a Lulav and Etrog

Selichot

Selichot is the opportunity to pray and prepare our hearts for the High Holidays, and this year we will be joining together with Temple Shalom (Auburn) at Temple Beth El to be together as we get ready for the High Holidays. The service will be led by Rabbi Sruli Dresdner, Rebbetzin Lisa Mayer, and their family will give us an opportunity to pray, sing, and reflect as we move into the last week of Elul.

- **Service Offerings:** In-person
- **Livestream Option:** Unavailable
- **Location:** Susan T. Goldberg Courtyard, weather permitting
- **Seating:** Provided
- **Outdoor Mask Policy:** Optional for fully vaccinated individuals outdoors
- **Indoor Mask Policy:** Masks are required indoors by everyone ages 3+ at all times.
Exception: optional for fully vaccinated service leaders, speakers, gabbayim, and Torah readers.
- **Social Distancing:** Encouraged

For More Information

Digital Shofar

High Holidays 5782 Webpage

Temple Beth El | 400 Deering Avenue, Portland, ME 04103

Unsubscribe_gleckman@mindspring.com

[Update Profile](#) | [Constant Contact Data Notice](#)

Sent by office@tbemaine.org powered by



Try email marketing for free today!