

Temple Ohav Sholom



August 7, 2020

We hope that you and your loved ones are healthy and safe. To say that the High Holidays will be a little different this year is obviously an understatement. In applying the same fact- and values-based decision-making process that has guided our response to the pandemic from the beginning, the Temple leadership has concluded that in-person services and related activities are simply not feasible this fall. However, as we pledged in our May update, our congregation will still celebrate the High Holidays together.

The purpose of this letter is to detail the content and logistics of the plan developed by Rabbi Kessler and the Board of Trustees. We are committed to providing an experience for our members that is as engaging, meaningful, and stress-free as possible. You will see that we have also included a social action component, collecting items needed by our friends at the Health Ministries of Christ Lutheran Church.

We have divided the congregation into three groups based on membership categories. With your group assignment in mind, please review and follow the schedule enclosed with this letter.

We did our best to assign families and friends to the same groups. Although we encourage members to generally stay in their assigned groups, we understand if you need to make modifications to your own schedule. Significant variation may, however, cause technical problems for everyone on the days of the events that we very much hope to avoid.

Your household is assigned to the following group:

Group Aleph _____

Group Bet _____

Group Gimel _____

We recognize that this is a more complicated way to celebrate the High Holidays than in years past. However, we are confident that it can work if everyone carefully follows the schedule and instructions. We also hope you embrace the opportunity to be with your friends and loved ones during this pandemic, even if it is through a screen.

A few special notes:

- **The passwords are the equivalent of paper tickets in prior years.** Therefore, only full members in good standing (i.e., current in their dues payments) will receive them. Just like in prior years, Associate Members and non-members may purchase access to our High Holiday services; please contact the Temple office by August 25th.

- For both security and budgetary reasons, please do not share passwords.
- To ensure that we have enough prayer books for everyone, each household will be limited to a maximum of four prayer books. However, you may download additional electronic versions, as explained later in this letter.
- For health and safety reasons, please do not enter the building during pick-up or drop-off. Everyone in your car remain in the vehicle and be masked.
- If you are in the Greater Harrisburg area but cannot pick up your prayer book and password due to health issues or other special circumstances, we would be happy to deliver them to you if you notify the Temple office by August 25th.
- If you are not in the Greater Harrisburg area, we will mail you your password before the High Holidays. However, we ask that you save us the cost of mailing your prayer books and, instead, download the electronic editions of *Mishkan HaNefesh* for Rosh Hashanah and for Yom Kippur. They are available on Amazon for your Kindle at nominal cost. If you need special assistance, please contact the Temple office.
- The links to the services will be accessible only during the posted times. For example, you can watch the Erev Rosh Hashanah service any time that Friday night between 5:00 p.m. and 11:00 p.m. *Don't worry – it is not a six-hour service!* It is available for viewing at your convenience at any point during that six-hour period, after which the links will disappear. Then the Saturday morning Rosh Hashanah service will be available between 9:00 a.m. and 2:00 p.m., and so on. This is to replicate the traditional flow of services in real time, even though the services themselves will be pre-recorded.

Thank you to everyone involved in planning and implementing this year's special High Holidays program: the Temple's Officers and Board of Trustees, COVID-19 Response Committee, Worship Committee, Social Action Committee, Sisterhood, Seventh Grade Religious School Class, other volunteers, and, of course, our incredible staff. On behalf of this dedicated team, we wish you all a happy and healthy New Year. We also ask for your continued support and patience as we navigate these uncharted waters and do our very best to ensure that your spiritual, educational, and social needs are met during this challenging time.

As always, please do not hesitate to contact us with any questions and concerns.

-Sincerely,



Peter Kessler
Rabbi



Rob Teplitz
President

Enclosures