



Don't Get Lost...

To prevent delays and miscommunications be sure to provide UHC with your current contact details if you relocate within Singapore.

xxxxxxxxx@gmail.com

Newsletter Submissions

The UHC Shofar is the newsletter for the United Hebrew Congregation in Singapore. Contributions are always welcome. Send submissions or suggestions to the editors:

Sharon Glass
xxxxxxxxxxxxx@gmail.com

Brett Gold
brettagold@gmail.com

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Full Schedule of Events for the High Holidays



Many of us have recently returned to Singapore after weeks away. Many have children getting adjusted to a new year at school, while others are brand new to the tiny island-state and are busy settling in and figuring out which end is up. But ready or not the High Holy Days are fast approaching and UHC has a full complement of services, activities, and meals to keep everyone involved in Jewish life here in Singapore. Check out the full listing of Holiday events starting on page 7.

Progressive Outreach Workers to Visit Singapore

The UHC is organizing three events in connection with the visit of Sam Block from the Union for Progressive Judaism.

Friday evening, August 31 Shabbat service followed by potluck dairy/veggie dinner at home of UHC President Rachel Saks, Blk I-N Woodland Heights #6-19. (on Dunearn Rd, near Alexandra Rd. Home phone: 5555-9322.) Arrival/registration at 6:30 p.m. service starting around 7 p.m. Following the service, Mr. Block will speak on growth of Progressive Judaism in Israel. To attend **please RSVP to Rachel Saks at xxxxxxxx@yahoo.com by Wed, August 29.**

Sunday morning, September 2 dairy brunch and presentation on Israel's Security Fence at home of Donna & Jason Hill, 2 Wilson Park #10-34 (on Wilson Park, near Scotts Road and American Club; phone: 6836-9177). Brunch at 10:30, presentation starting around 11 a.m. Because of security and need to prepare, **those wishing to attend must pre-register by Thursday, August 30**; please reply to xxxxxxx@yahoo.com Contributions of salads & desserts welcome.

Sunday afternoon, September 2 from 4 to 6 p.m. an Israeli cooking class, Blk I-N Woodland Heights #6-19. Woodland Heights is on Dunearn, near the intersection with Alexandra Road. Home phone: 5555-9322. To attend **please RSVP to Rachel Saks at xxxxxxx@yahoo.com by Wednesday, August 29.**

We hope to see many of you at these events. If you have questions, please reply to xxxxxxxx@yahoo.com

Message from the President



Dear UHC Community,

Unlike the “January new year” set in the midst of the bleakness of winter (at least for those of us raised in and still oriented towards the northern hemisphere), the Jewish new year falls amidst a period of numerous “beginnings.” For some of us it is, as the liturgy tells us, a period of “return,” a time when we begin again from a place with which we are already familiar (a new academic year at our children’s schools, catching up with friends and colleagues with whom contact may have lapsed during the summer months).

For others this time of year - or the year itself - marks the beginning of a new initiative. There are among our membership families who have recently resettled to Singapore from other parts of the world - and we welcome you - and there are those who are settling into new professional and personal roles (we particularly congratulate the new parents in our ranks).

For us as a community I believe this Rosh Hashanah marks a “beginning” in both senses of the word. We are, as a community, re-establishing our connections to one another and re-initiating our cycle of ritual, educational and social activities. In this light we mark the first in a new series of book club discussions, look forward to the reintroduction of adult education sessions and rejoin the community for monthly Shabbats. And as a marker of a larger anniversary cycle, we welcome back this year, for the 15th consecutive year our “rabbi out of residence” Rabbi Lenny Mandel his wife, Linda, and for the third year, our cantor Susan Sherman.

In addition, though, I would like to propose that this new year offers us an opportunity to begin in earnest a dialogue about

some new endeavors which we may want to be undertaking in recognition of our community's growth (our numbers now stand at an all-time high and our ranks continue to swell with new arrivals from overseas and long-time Singapore residents who are taking up UHC membership) and accomplishments to date. We are no longer a fledgling organization fighting to survive through the coming year but a financially stable, programmatically active organization that can and should be thinking about how best to serve our members' diverse needs as we look ahead.

To this end, I have a set of fairly modest but concrete proposals which I hope to be putting before you in the weeks and months ahead, ideas which I believe can expand the organization's offerings and potential without requiring a significant new infusion of funds. But the adoption of these measures - or the articulation of a different vision and set of goals for our community - can only happen through the active participation and support of you, our members.

So, to those of you who have already embarked with me on the early stages of this exploratory process, I thank you, and look forward to continuing this effort. To those of you who have not yet played a role in the planning process but will be lending us your ideas and feedback in the months ahead, I welcome you. Indeed, I welcome all of your input in the months ahead as we craft this collective vision for the community.

In the meantime, let me wish you all a very happy, healthy and sweet new year. L'shana tovah u'mtukah.

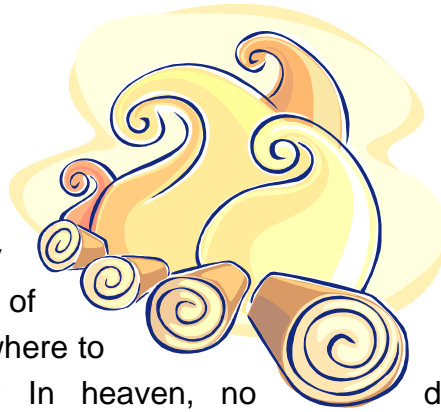
I look forward to seeing many of you at services and meals in the coming weeks,

--Rachel Saks



If Not Higher

By I.L. Peretz



Every Friday during the month of Elul the Rabbi of Nemirov would vanish. He was nowhere to be seen. Where could the Rabbi be? In heaven, no doubt, the people thought, asking God to bring peace in the New Year. Where could the Rabbi be? A villager decided to find out.

One night he sneaked into the Rabbi's home, slid under the Rabbi's bed, and waited. Just before dawn, the Rabbi awakened, got out of bed, and began to dress. He put on work pants, high boots, a big hat, a coat, and a wide belt. He put a rope in his pocket, tucked an ax in his belt, and left the house. The villager followed.

The Rabbi crept in the shadows to woods at the edge of town. He took the ax, chopped down a small tree, and split it into logs. Then he bundled the wood, tied it with the rope, put it on his back, and began walking.

He stopped beside a small broken-down shack and knocked at the window.

"Who is there?" asked the frightened, sick woman inside.

"I, Vassil the peasant," answered the Rabbi, entering the house. "I have wood to sell."

"I am a poor widow. Where will I get the money?" she asked.

"I'll lend it to you," replied the Rabbi.

"How will I pay you back?" asked the woman.

"I will trust you," said the Rabbi.

The Rabbi put the wood into the oven, kindled the fire, and left without a word.

Now whenever anyone reports that the Rabbi has gone to heaven, the villager only adds quietly, "Heaven? If not higher."



10 Things You Can Do For the High Holidays (Besides Attending Services)

The High Holidays are coming. For most of us, Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur mean going to services. Even for Jews who rarely frequent a synagogue during the year, the High Holidays mark the annual trip to the temple, synagogue, or shul. Yet the High Holidays offer many other opportunities for us to connect with Judaism and Jewish tradition. Here are ten things you can do to enhance your observance of these holidays, including a couple that may enrich your synagogue-going experience.

1. Observe *Slichot*

The period from Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur is called the “Yomim N’ra-im” or Days of Awe. It marks a period of intense reflection, as we feel that G-d is judging us, and we need to rectify our shortcomings during the past year and resolve to do better. Traditionally, the season of repentance starts not on Rosh Hashanah, but at the start of the preceding Jewish month of Elul. Penitential prayers are added to daily services, and one should begin the process of approaching those we have hurt to seek forgiveness.

Among the customs many progressive congregations have revived is the Slichot service. Slichot, which means “pardons,” is typically observed the second Saturday before Rosh Hashanah. In traditional congregations worshippers gather just before midnight and then stay awake much of the evening, reciting special prayers. A number of non-Orthodox congregations have added to these prayers preliminary study and social programs. One year my home synagogue held a concert of Jewish music, performed by congregants. Another synagogue in our area screened the film *Avalon*, a touching film about an immigrant family of Jewish musicians. The local Ashkenazim should be holding its annual Slichot services Saturday night, September 1 or 8. (The local Sephardic groups observe slichot prayers every day from the start of Elul through Yom Kippur.) Attending those services, or gathering close friends for an evening of Jewish reflection, can be one way to help “get ready” for the repentance we undertake during the High Holidays.

2. Send New Year’s Cards

Sending greeting cards is another way to enhance the High Holiday season. In Jewish tradition, on Rosh Hashanah, G-d opens a book and initially decrees each person’s fate for the coming year. Since people can change their fate through repentance, the period of judging continues through Yom Kippur, at which point our fate is sealed (some claim it continues through Hoshannah Rabbah, the last day of Sukkot). In many communities it is customary for Jews to send cards inscribed with the text “May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year” (“L’shanah tovah tikatevu v’tichatemu”) or “G’mar chatimah tovah,” (“May it be concluded with be a good seal”). Many Jews buy or order New Year’s cards inscribed with these and other good wishes, to send to their friends and family members. Here in Singapore, one can easily find beautiful New Year’s cards on the Internet. Following are just two of the many sites you might consider for sending New Year’s cards by e-mail:

<http://www.yahoo.americangreetings.com/category.pd?path=40657&>

http://www.123greetings.com/events/rosh_hashanah/happy/

3. Buy New Clothes

Because the High Holidays mark the start of a new Jewish year, in past times many Jews used the occasion to buy new clothes. Books of old Jewish photographs show many immigrant families at the turn of the 20th century exhibiting the new outfits they acquired for the holiday. For some of us, buying a new suit or dress may enhance the feeling that a new year has truly begun. No doubt Singapore's tailors and retailers would approve!

4. Prepare and Eat Foods with Honey

Despite the seriousness of the High Holidays, Jews also associate the New Year with sweetness, perhaps in hope of being sealed for a good year. It is customary to wish people a "good and sweet" year ("Shanah tovah u'metukah"), and to dip bread (challah) or apples in honey, to mark the sweetness of the season (many Orthodox Jews continue this practice through the end of Sukkot). A number of special sweet foods, prepared with honey, are customary for the season, including honey cake and taiglach (dough cooked in honey). The following websites contain recipes for these treats:

http://www.epicurious.com/recipes/recipe_views/views/14601

<http://www.epicurious.com/cooking/holiday/jewish/hashanah>

<http://learn.jtsa.edu/topics/kids/together/roshhashanah/recipes.shtml>

5. Perform Taschlich

During the afternoon of Rosh Hashanah (on the second day of the holiday, if Rosh Hashanah falls on Shabbat), many Jews perform a ceremony called Taschlich. Taschlich, which means "throwing away," entails reciting prayers and throwing breadcrumbs into a moving body of water as way of symbolically casting away our sins. The very act of standing before a stream (or maybe on the beach at Sentosa!) helps some Jews remember their sins and vow to do better as they throw each handful of crumbs into the water. In past years my children and I used to enjoy visiting a stream near our house for this ceremony. Recently several congregations in my old neighborhood have used Taschlich as a way to bring together Jews who, belonging to different Jewish movements, might not otherwise meet during the holiday. Many traditional prayer books have prayers or psalms designated for Taschlich.

6. Prepare or Attend a Rosh Hashanah Seder

Many Sephardic Jewish families mark Rosh Hashanah by eating not just challah and apples dipped with honey, but also beans, squash, leeks, pomegranate seeds, and other special foods linked to blessings appropriate for the New Year. Some households turn the succession of foods, each with its own Hebrew reading and blessing, into a kind of Seder for the holiday. In past years the Jewish Welfare Board has even printed the texts for these recitations, which many local families use. The following websites provide information on Rosh Hashanah Seders:

<http://www.diaspora.org.il/holidays/newyear-sed.htm>

(Note that Jews in Singapore, tracing their roots to Baghdad, typically use a fish head, rather than a ram's head, in their ceremonies)

7. Give Tzedakah

In Judaism, receiving forgiveness is usually linked to three things: t'shuvah (sincere repentance, or "turning"), t'filah (prayer), and tzedakah (giving charity). Besides doing their own fund-raising, many synagogues organize campaigns for special causes. These include various organizations based in Israel, our local Jewish federations, and special groups such as Mazon, a Jewish charity

that combats hunger through contributions to food banks and similar organizations. Many of us receive stacks of solicitations from different groups during the year. Pulling out these envelopes and filling some with checks could be one way of fulfilling the tzedakah called for in the prayer book.

8. Order and Learn to Blow a Shofar

Traditionally, Jews have used the blowing of a ram's horn, or shofar, to mark the solemnity of the High Holidays. The shofar service is a much-anticipated part of the experience of Rosh Hashanah, and blowing the shofar for Rosh Hashanah and at the end of Yom Kippur is a great honor. In my home congregation, the rabbi invites congregants on the second day to bring their own shofars and participate in a special set of readings for the holiday. At the UHC we have been fortunate to have Ben Spalter serve as our "Ba-al K'riah" (shofar blower) for the past few years. Many families own or collect their shofars and display them proudly in their homes. For those who would like to order one online, here are two of the many websites offering them:

<http://www.theshofarman.com/catalog.htm>

http://www.judaicaonline.com/CT_Rosh/RHSHOFAR.htm

Those interested in learning how to blow the shofar may wish to consult the rabbi. The following non-Jewish website offers links to the traditional shofar sounds (Jewish websites seem not to offer such links):

<http://www.piney.com/Shofar.html>

9. Wear Sneakers for Yom Kippur

Traditionally, Jews avoid wearing leather shoes on major fast days – Yom Kippur and Tishah B'av. Leather shoes are considered a sign of prosperity, and on these days Jews want to appear humble before G-d. In some communities, traditional Jews avoid using leather products generally, as a sign of refraining from unnecessary killing. Wearing sneakers, or other non-leather shoes, may help some of us feel more in the spirit of asking G-d for forgiveness. It may also make walking easier, for those living close to the American Club!

10. Buy and Wear a Kittel

A kittel is a long white robe that some traditional Ashkenazic Jews traditionally wear on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. Some also conduct Passover Seders in their kittels. The kittel's white color is a sign of purity. In addition, the formality of the kittel provides an alternative to wearing a suit jacket. At my home synagogue, kittels have become so popular that the rabbi, cantor, and many congregants have all started wearing them. They can be ordered from Jewish bookstores or even made by a local tailor. The following websites have more information:

<http://www.britannica.com/eb/article?tocId=9045687>

<http://www.milechai.com/judaica/kittel.html>

http://www.judaicaonline.com/CT_Rosh/PSKITTEL.htm

Announcements

Birth

Lisa Hilboa made her debut performance at 12:55 pm on Sunday, May 20th to parents Andrew & Lily Hilboa. Lisa lays claim to being the most “UHC” of babies, since her mom apparently started experiencing contractions while attending the congregational Shabbat dinner on the 18th! Congratulations to Andrew, Lily and their extended family!



Evening with Prime Minister

Those of you who have reserved seats for Geshet Singapore's evening with His Excellency, Mr. Lee Hsien Loong, Prime Minister of the Republic of Singapore, on Tuesday, 4 September 2007, will be receiving confirmation emails shortly.

Yizkor List

The Yizkor list and forms will be available at the registration table throughout the High Holidays starting with Erev Rosh Hashanah. The forms can be picked up, filled-out and returned with cash or check. The list is a perpetual one so names are never deleted. Please take the opportunity to check the list to verify if a name you wish to add is already there. The UHC's Yizkor list serves two purposes:

1) To remember our loved ones and include their names in the Yom Kippur Yizkor service. The list will show the year the name was first added. Once on the list it is not necessary to make further annual payments.



2) To raise funds for the UHC. We suggest a minimum donation of \$18 for each name. Eighteen in Hebrew is written (chet,yud) which also means LIFE.

Kabbalat Shabbat Services

Some members of the local (Orthodox) congregation who are of Ashkenazi heritage have begun conducting monthly Friday evening services at the Chesed El synagogue at on the first Friday of every month at 7 pm. They have invited anyone who is interested in joining them. For more information please contact the coordinator, Donald Kessler at xxxxxxxxxx@hotmail.com

Please note: These services are in the Orthodox tradition, meaning that men and women are seated separately and the service is in Hebrew.

Talmud Torah

Growth in Judaism is a lifelong process. Its successful incorporation into our lives depends on knowledge and practice acquired in the early years. As parents, you know that these important years pass by all too quickly.



Your children are at a crucial stage in their personal development - to grow in their Jewishness, they need your enthusiastic support.

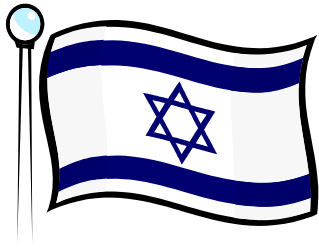
At Talmud Torah, we work together with families to foster a sense of the joy and challenge that comes with Jewish living. Without your support and participation, we can't be as effective as we want to be. We do best in partnership with parents, working together to nurture these young minds.

We look forward to having your children join us at the Talmud Torah. We will ensure that they have the opportunity to develop their understanding and love for Judaism in a warm and safe environment. The next session begins on Sept. 2.

To register your child for Talmud Torah, please call Rabbi Mort Shepard at (065) 9731 2181 or Andrew Lim at (065) 9631 7112.

Announcements, cont'd

'Yesh' Israel Trip - Join Us!



The King David School is planning its second three week educational trip to Israel in December 2007 for students in Years 10 to experience the many facets of

Israel. Students from the wider Progressive community are welcome.

The three week trip is composed of: spending time on Kibbutz Lotan, aligned to the Israeli Progressive Movement, that is leading the environmental revolution in Israel; hands-on work experience on one of the environmental projects on the kibbutz as well as meeting peers who live in the Arava area; seminars and tours with students from The Leo Baeck College, the largest Reform school in Israel, including being billeted with families of students; and seeing the many incredible attractions that Israel has to offer including Masada, the Dead Sea, Jerusalem, Tel Aviv and the Golan Heights.

Students from all congregations and affiliates are welcome to join the King David School students on this trip. We already have several young people committed to joining us and would love to see more students from other schools as well.

Please contact **Sydney Fischer**

xxxxx.xxx@kds.edu or 8508-9600 during school hours for further info.



Union for PROGRESSIVE JUDAISM
UNITING COMMUNITIES THROUGH SHARED BELIEFS & VISION

UPJ Biennial Conference

From Thursday, October 18 at 3 pm to Sunday, October 21 at 1 pm. The Old Bridge Apartment Hotel, 5 Main Street, Hobart, Tasmania. Attendance must be confirmed by August 31. Contact Laura Hall: xxxxxxx@upj.org or Larry Brown: xxxxxxx@xtra.co

Top 10 Jewish Book List

Even before David Letterman, everyone loved a Top Ten List. This one, about Judaism books, is from the internet, assembled by Rabbi Miriam Spitzer. She addresses the top ten texts of biblical, philosophy, poetry, history and many other aspects of Judaism. She doesn't expect everyone to agree. But what do you think of her top 10 novels?

The Chosen

Chaim Potok

Exodus

Leon Uris

As a Driven Leaf

Milton Steinberg

Night

Elie Weisel

Inside, Outside

Herman Wouk.

Jephte's Daughter

Naomi Ragen.

The Love of Elspeth Baker

Myron Kaufmann

The Rise of David Levinsky

Abraham Cahan. An immigrant success story, written by the long-time editor of the Yiddish Forward

Badenheim 1939

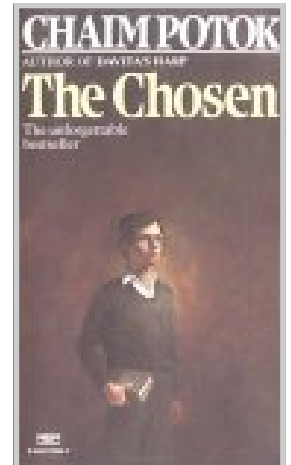
Aharon Appelfeld

Goodbye Columbus

Philip Roth

For her complete list, check out:

http://www.myjewishlearning.com/texts/about_jewish_texts/What_Are_Jewish_Texts//Is_This_Jewish/tophundred_90.htm





Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur

2007 - 5768

- These events are open to UHC members **only**. If you are not a member and wish to attend please email: xxxxxxxxxxx@hotmail.com
- All **services** are free for UHC members. Advance payment is required for **meals**.
- **If you need a registration form please contact Marcy Goh at: xxxxxx@pacific.net.sg**
- Venue for all events is the American Club unless noted otherwise. As the Club rooms are often very well air-conditioned, you may wish to wear long sleeves or bring a wrap.
- Childcare is offered during services held at the American Club, except for 21 September. We request that parents accompany their child(ren) to and from the childcare room. If your child needs extra help or supervision, you or your amah are welcome to stay with them in the childcare room.
- **Children's holiday activities:** An age-appropriate introduction to the holiday and its themes for children between the ages of 3 and 7 at 11:00 am on 13 and 22 September. Please be aware that this is a learning activity (not babysitting), so all children must be accompanied by a parent or other adult who can help guide them during the sessions. Childcare will not be available during the children's holiday activities.

Rosh Hashanah

Tuesday, 11 Sept	8:00 pm	Architecture in Sound: A Musical Journey through the Days of Awe The music that we hear during the High Holy Days is an integral part of our emotional and spiritual journey into the New Year. Our prayers and texts come alive when they are sung to the ancient melodies of our people. Together with Cantor Caro we will learn about and experience their impact on us. At the home of xxxxx, Blk 1-N Woodland Heights, #13-19, <i>(please dress for outdoor seating)</i> If attending please call or email: xxxxxxxx@yahoo.com tel: 5555-9322
Wednesday, 12 Sept	6:00 pm	Registration (Please plan to be seated by 6:25pm)
	6:30 pm	Erev Rosh Hashanah Service commences Childcare available
	7:45 pm	Dinner Advance payment required
Thursday, 13 Sept	10:00 am	Rosh Hashanah Morning Service 10:00 - 11:00 am Childcare available 11:00 Children's Rosh Hashanah activity (a learning session, not babysitting) for children 3 to 7 years of age. All children must be accompanied by a parent or other adult who can help guide them during the activity.
	12:30 pm	Lunch (advance payment required)

Shabbat Shuvah

**Friday ,
14 Sept** **6:30 pm** **Shabbat Service and dinner**

Venue: Cohen home, 39 Nathan Road

There is no charge for this event but those coming are asked to provide a vegetable, salad or dessert to share. Please RSVP with names of those attending and the dish that you will bring: xxxxxxx@yahoo.com

**Saturday,
15 Sept** **10:00 am** **Celebration of Shabbat**

All are welcome to a participatory Shabbat morning service particularly geared towards our congregation's younger members. A dairy potluck luncheon will follow. Please RSVP with names of those attending and the dish that you will bring: xxxxxxx@yahoo.com

Venue: Cohen's, 42 Holland Road, Ban Guan Park, hp: 5555-8648

Community Planning Meeting

**Thursday,
20 Sept** **7:30 pm** All UHC members are invited to attend a Community Planning Meeting and Steering

Committee meeting with Rabbi Mandel and Cantor Sherman. Please share your feedback and suggestions for the year ahead.

Venue: Jill Kole's, 8 Garden Way, tel: 5555-0190 *(Please dress for outdoor seating)*

Yom Kippur

**Friday,
21 Sept** **7:30 pm** **Registration**

8:00 pm **Kol Nidre (Erev Yom Kippur) Service**
No kid's corner, please plan accordingly

**Saturday,
22 Sept** **10:00 am** **Yom Kippur Morning Service**

10:00 - 11:00 Childcare available

11:00 Children's Yom Kippur activity (a learning session, not babysitting) for children 3 to 7 years of age. All children must be accompanied by a parent or other adult who can help guide them during the activity.

4:00 pm **Adult Education led by Rabbi Thal**
"Making sense of Leviticus, making sense of Yom Kippur"

5:30 pm **Afternoon and Neilah (Concluding) Services**

7:30 pm **Break Fast buffet dinner**
Immediately following service, advance payment required

For questions or more information please contact:

Elisa Goh
5555-841 (after 5 pm)
xxxx@pacific.net

Pat Bloom
5555-8417
xxxxxxx@hotmail.com

Pam West
5555-8646
xxxxxxx@yahoo.com

UHC Happenings

Book Club

The group will be reading the following books in the near future:

For the Relief of Unbearable Urges
Nathan Englander

The Red Cavalry Stories
Issac Babel

Because They Hate

This month's UHC Book Club will discuss Brigitte Gabriel's *Because They Hate: A Survivor of Islamic Terror Warns America*. Founder of the **American Congress for Truth**, the author writes from her experiences as a child during the invasion of Lebanon by radical Muslims in 1975.



Please join us:

Wednesday, August 29 at 8:00 pm
98 Forest Park #04-64

For further details contact Laura Sussman:
xxxxxxx@gmail.com or Jeremy Goldberg:
xxxxxxxxxxxx@yahoo.com

Membership Fees Due

We are happy to announce that for the 4th year running, yearly UHC fees will remain fixed at a rate of \$250 for individual members and \$500 for family membership. Dues may be sent to:

Rhonda Levine
51 Leonie Road
#19-01 West Tower
Singapore 225498

Upcoming Shabbat Services

Mark your calendars now. Upcoming UHC Shabbat services and dinners are scheduled for the following Fridays:

October 19th

November 9th

December 14th

Sign-in begins at 6:30 pm, services at 7:00 with dinner following at 7:45, all on the 3rd floor of the Singapore Club. Please join us.

Computer Needed

UHC is looking for a computer (with keyboard and monitor) in good working condition capable of running at least a Window XP operating system and basic word processing, spreadsheet and desktop publishing software. It need not be a high-end machine but neither an antique! Software not necessary.



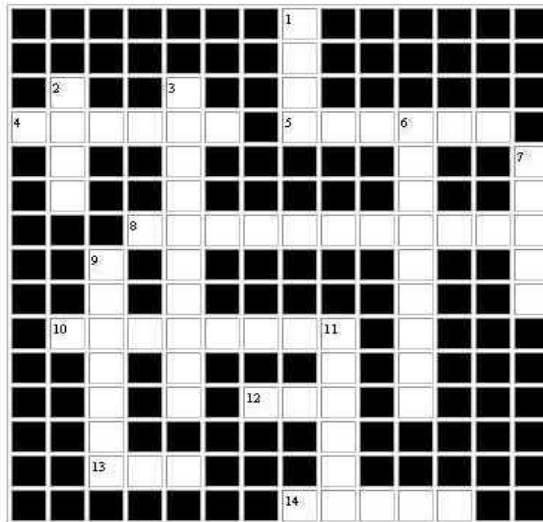
Shofar Word Search

find the words going horizontally & vertically

ROSH HASHANAH
 YOM KIPPUR
 ELUL
 TISHREI
 SHOFAR
 TASHLICH
 HIGH HOLIDAYS
 JONAH AND THE WHALE
 FISH HEAD
 HONEY
 MACHZOR
 RAMS HORN
 SHRILLY THE SHOFAR
 CHARITY
 APPLES
 DINA
 DANNY

Rosh Hashanah Fun Facts Crossword Puzzle

PartyThemeShop.com



Across

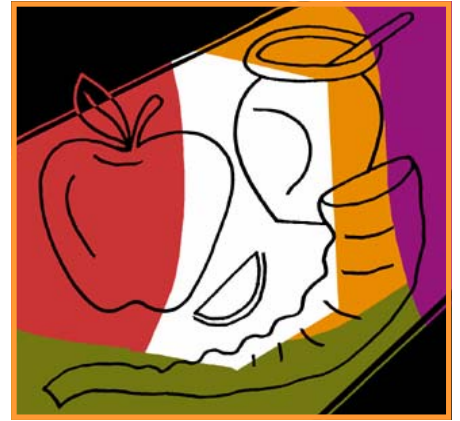
4. What type of calendar is used?
5. When does Rosh Hashanah start?
8. Rosh Hashanah is known as a Day of ____.
10. Who get together during Rosh Hashanah?
12. How many days to Rosh Hashanah?
13. How many days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur?
14. What is commonly put into the pocket to cast off sins?

Down

1. Who celebrates Rosh Hashanah?
2. Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New ____.
3. Rosh Hashanah is a time for self-examination and what?
6. Another name for a Jewish temple.
7. Apples dipped in honey symbolizes the wish for a ____ new year.
9. A time for resting.
11. What instrument is used on this day?

Not a ‘Happy New Year’

David Kraemer
Forward.com



...Rosh Hashanah is the Day of Judgment (the annual one, not the final one) and Yom Kippur is the day of Divine forgiveness. It is the former, therefore, that calls for fear and trembling, and the latter that calls for rejoicing, at least as the end of the day approaches.

In the experience of most Jews, at least in the United States, Rosh Hashanah is an occasion of relative joy. It is a time when they put on their best and even new garb, families gather for abundant, festive meals and fellow congregants greet one another with a hearty “Happy New Year!” either in English, Hebrew (“Shanah tovah”), Yiddish (“Gut yontif”) or some combination of the above. By contrast, Yom Kippur is a time of great solemnity, marked not just by fasting and deprivation but also by lowered voices and lowered glances. It is a time — or so we imagine — when we should stand in fear and trembling before our Maker.

But this is not the way it is supposed to be. Somehow, in the course of time, we have gotten it (almost) all wrong. In fact, the sources that define this period, from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, are perfectly clear in their insistence that Rosh Hashanah is the Day of Judgment (the annual one, not the final one) and Yom Kippur is the day of Divine forgiveness. It is the former, therefore, that calls for fear and trembling, and the latter that calls for rejoicing, at least as the end of the day approaches.

Let us start with the Mishnah (circa 200 C.E.), the first Jewish text to articulate this notion. The Mishnah describes Rosh Hashanah (1:2) as the time when “all of the world’s inhabitants pass before Him [to be judged] as sheep [before the shepherd]” (alternatively: “as troops [before the general]”); the Mishnah makes no mention of Yom Kippur in its discussion of judgment. The Gemara’s commentary on this Mishnah (page 16a) adds a variety of different opinions, but they

all agree that judgment at least begins on Rosh Hashanah, while Yom Kippur is probably the time when the verdict is sealed.

We must understand the meaning of this image: If the verdict is sealed on Yom Kippur, this means that the judgment was completed sometime earlier, presumably on Rosh Hashanah. But as we all know, there is a difference between judgment and sentencing. A person might be judged guilty but given a light sentence — or even no sentence at all. In the Jewish system of annual Divine judgment, the verdict is sealed, and the sentence declared, on Yom Kippur (at least until the later tradition extended this period to Hoshanah Rabbah). This is to our advantage, for Yom Kippur is the day of God's mercy.

But back to Rosh Hashanah. If this is the day of judgment, then this is surely not a day for festivity or lightheartedness. It should instead be a day of fear and trembling. So how did Rosh Hashanah become a "Happy New Year"? The answer, I suspect, is a product of translation and cultural borrowing. Rosh Hashanah is properly translated as "New Year" (literally, "the head of the year") and for us, "New Year" implies joyous celebration. In our understanding, New Years are supposed to be happy! But this is not the way it was to be in our tradition, nor in many ancient traditions. In the alternative, a New Year is meant to be a period of regeneration and purification, both of which require the elimination and forgiveness of sins before they can be realized. So the process must naturally begin with judgment, and we must approach the whole process with introspection and anxiety. We will be judged on Rosh Hashanah — and, if we are honest with ourselves, probably judged guilty — but we can look forward to Divine mercy on the day of God's forgiveness, Yom Kippur.

We will be judged on Rosh Hashanah — and, if we are honest with ourselves, probably judged guilty — but we can look forward to Divine mercy on the day of God's forgiveness, Yom Kippur.

Of course, this recognition demands of us not only a change of attitude but also a change of greeting. So let me wish you, on your Rosh Hashanah, a good outcome in judgment — and a Happy Yom Kippur.

David Kraemer is professor of Talmud and rabbinics and Joseph J. and Dora Abbell librarian at The Jewish Theological Seminary.

A Contemporary Al Chet

Meaning "for the sin", the Al Chet is a recitation of sins or mistakes we confess to, both for ourselves and on behalf of the entire Jewish people. The Al Chet is said 10 times in the course of Yom Kippur services. Below is an updated version of the time-honored classic.

For the sin we have committed against You ...

By taking for granted our healthy family and loyal friends
By failing to tell the people we love just how much we love them, in words and in deeds

By moving away, then calling less often, writing infrequently

By neglecting to hold our children, to kiss our sons as well as our daughters

By forgetting to call our parents

By fighting with our siblings, whether we're 15 or 50

By interrupting dinner with our family to answer the phone

By missing dinner entirely

By scolding our children for their behavior before understanding its cause

By avoiding parent-child talks, because the issues are so difficult

By using fowl language and expecting our children to refrain

By believing that our teens need us less, not more, than in previous years

By giving our children wings but impeding their ability to fly

By hesitating to trust the instincts of our young adults

By confusing their dreams for *themselves* with *our* dreams for them.

By fearing our children's choices to become "too Jewish"

By questioning their decision to make Aliyah

By listening too little, talking too much

By shouting "You've failed" with our eyes, or our actions

By forgiving too late, or not at all

By not accepting others for who they are

By trying to control those around us, refusing to admit it

By failing to say we're wrong, when we know that we are

By refusing to apologize, when we know it's appropriate

By forgetting to say "Thank you"...a lot

By trying to do it all, then losing patience with those who support us

By ignoring those in need, if we know their caller ID

By invading the thoughts of others by shouting on our cell phones

By reading our e-mails instead of paying attention when talking on the phone

By being rude to a waitress, abrupt with a clerk

By losing patience with our seniors, because they're slow, or forgetful

By fostering intolerance as we listen to rude jokes in silence

By attending movies and watching TV programs that glorify violence and gratuitous sex

By playing games that trivialize war

By ignoring atrocities because they're so far away

By helping those abroad, then forgetting those at home

By waiting for disaster before giving to strangers

By forgetting the importance of small acts of kindness

By neglecting to show this kindness, every day

By making promises we know we won't keep

By criticizing others' beliefs before understanding their hearts

By failing to question, to challenge, when such understanding is elusive

By our judgmental attitudes, for who are we to judge?

By measuring wealth through income and possessions

By stretching the truth for economic gain

By compromising our principles because of expediency

By making inappropriate choices daily while denying they add up to a life style

By failing to reach our potential because we're too tired, preoccupied, distracted

By looking to others for answers before searching deep within

By ignoring those who might help us in our search ...

For all these sins, we ask: pardon us, forgive us, and grant us atonement.

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