

Rosh Hashonah

ראש־השנה

2013 / 5774

WORKMEN'S CIRCLE

Brookline, Massachusetts





This High Holiday program was created by

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We gratefully thank countless sources and the many individuals who provided inspiring and thoughtful text, poems, art and music, contributing to this richly moving annual community event.

Sholom Aleykhem
(*Instrumental, followed by singing*)

Leshone Toyve. Welcome to the New Year, 5774. For thousands of years the Jewish people have celebrated the New Year with joy, hope, and thoughtful reflection. Today we are here to continue that tradition. The holidays of Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur provide time and space for self-examination and personal reflection. We are here to reflect on the year that has passed and open our hearts to the possibilities of the year to come.

Today is a day of introspection and growth, of assessment and healing, of receptiveness and renewal. We evaluate and measure ourselves and our choices. We strive to take responsibility and to write our own destiny for the New Year. We ask: What has transpired this past year and what adjustments can we make to the next year individually, in our communities, and in the world? What do Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur mean to our community and to our families and ourselves? Today, we will consider these questions together, as a community.

At this time, please turn and introduce yourself to someone sitting near you.

If you are comfortable, join hands as we sing.

Hiney Ma Tov
(*How Good and Pleasant It Is for People to Live Together in Unity*)

Hiney ma tov umanayim
Shevet akhim gam yakhad
Hiney ma tov umanayim
Shevet akhim gam yakhad

Hiney ma tov
Shevet akhim gam yakhad
Hiney ma tov
Shevet akhim gam yakhad

Oy vi gut un vi voyl es is
Briders un shvesters tsuzamen
Oy vi gut un vi voyl es is
Briders un shvesters tsuzamen
Oy vi voyl es iz
Briders un shvesters tsuzamen
Oy vi voyl es iz
Briders un shvesters tsuzamen



The Names of the Holiday

There are different names for the holiday we are celebrating today. The most familiar, of course, is Rosh Hashonah. The name Rosh Hashonah means the head or beginning of the year. We say good-bye to the old year and welcome to a New Year.

Another name for the holiday is Yom Hadin, the Day of Judgment. We examine and evaluate our lives.

And another name is Yom Teruah, the Day of the Blowing of the Shofar. On this day the Shofar is sounded to awaken us as we welcome in the New Year.

And another name is Yom Hazikoren, the Day of Remembering. 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 in joy. Yet in this hour, we also reflect upon our sorrows, failures, and disappointments.

Candle Lighting

Members of last year's Zayin Class, the Bar/Bas Mitzvah Class, light the holiday candles.

Each holiday begins with candle lighting to represent bringing light into darkness, hope into despair. May the light guide our way in this New Year and serve as beacons of hope as we move forward.

(All)

For the Hebrew blessing, we say:

Borukh Ato Adonoy Elohenu Melekh ho'olom
asher kidishonu b'mitzvosov vetsivonu l'hadlik ner shel Yom Tov.

ברוך אתה יי אלהינו מלך העולם אשר קדשנו במצותיו וצונו להדליק נר של יום טוב

In Yiddish, we say:

Mir bagrisn dem nay yor. Zol der klang fun trua
onheybn a yor fun sholem un frayhayt far ale mentshn.

מיר באגריסן דעם ניי יאר. זאל דער קלאנג פֿון תרועה

אנהייבן א יאר פֿון שלום און פֿרייהייט פֿאר אַלע מענטשן.

In English, that means:

We welcome the New Year in the tradition of our people.
May the sound of the shofar begin a year of peace and freedom for all people.

Shehekheyonu

[The Shehekheyonu is traditionally said upon starting any holiday. More broadly, it is said as a statement of gratitude at reaching an important point in our lives.]

This is a special occasion for us, for last year we began our Bar/Bas Mitzvah studies in the Zayin Class. In the spring we entered a new chapter in our participation in the Jewish community at our Bar/Bas Mitzvah. With these words of the Shehekheyonu we celebrate our having reached this occasion, our first Rosh Hashonah since graduating Shule.

(All)

For the Hebrew blessing, we say:

Borukh Ato Adonoy Elohenu Melekh ho'olom
Shehekheyonu, vekymonu, vehigyonu, lazman hazeh.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהֵחֵינּוּ וְקִיָּמנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לַזְמַן הַזֶּה

In Yiddish, we say:

Mir rufn oys undzer groys freyd un dankshaft far undzer lebn tsuzamen.

מִיר רופן אויס אונדזער גרויס פֿרייד און דאַנקשאַפֿט פֿאַר אונדזער לעבן צוזאַמען.

In English, that means:

In the tradition of our people we voice our joy and gratitude
for our continuing life together as community.

(Graduates sit)

(All sing Shehekheyonu)

Borukh Ato Adonoy Elohenu Melekh ho'olom
Shehekheyonu, vekymonu, vehigyonu, lazman hazeh

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁהֵחֵינּוּ וְקִיָּמנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לַזְמַן הַזֶּה

On Rosh Hashonah, as we reflect on the past year, we think about and project who we aspire to be in the year to come as individuals, as families, as communities, and in the world. Let us lift our voices for the future we envision.

Sholem Lid
(Peace Song)

	לאָמיר אַלע פֿריילעך זײַן,
Lomir ale freylekh zayn,	לאָמיר אַלע זינגען.
Lomir ale zingen.	
Lomir ale freylekh zayn,	לאָמיר אַלע פֿריילעך זײַן,
Lomir ale zingen.	לאָמיר אַלע זינגען.
Zingen far sholem,	
Zingen far broyt,	זינגען פֿאַר שלום,
Boyen a morgn	
On has un on noyt.	זינגען פֿאַר ברויט,
	בויען אַ מאָרגן
Zingen far sholem,	
Zingen far broyt,	אַן האָס און אַן נויט.
Boyen a morgn fun sholem,	
Boyen a morgn fun sholem.	זינגען פֿאַר שלום,
	זינגען פֿאַר ברויט,
(Let us all rejoice, let us all sing.	
Sing for peace, sing for bread.	
Build a future without hate or need.	בויען אַ מאָרגן פֿון שלום,
Build a future of peace.)	בויען אַ מאָרגן פֿון שלום.

This year's Zayin class, the Bar/Bas Mitzvah class, tells the story of Rosh Hashonah.

The History of the Holiday

[Religious Jews believe Adam and Eve were created on Rosh Hashonah, and hence it is the birthday of the world. Other momentous things happened on Rosh Hashonah. On Rosh Hashonah, Joseph was freed from an Egyptian prison. And later on, the Jews in Egypt stopped their slave labor, as they started the rebellion which would lead to their liberation from Egypt.]

As the graduating class for this year, who are preparing for our Bar/Bas Mitzvah, we have the honor of telling our community the story of Rosh Hashonah.

This is the first day of the Jewish New Year – a day when we come together to remember the year just past, and to plan the year to come.

This is a day of joy: we are thankful for life, for the health and happiness that make life bright and good, for our dear families, and for all the rich blessings that we enjoy every day.

This is a day when we express our hope that we shall be blessed with continued life, happiness, and peace. Welcome to a New Year!

But how can this be a New Year? It is still the old year on the calendars on our walls.

This is the New Year of the Jewish calendar. This is a holiday that Jews all over the world celebrate together.

But why does Rosh Hashonah happen in the fall of the year?

Thousands of years ago, the Jewish people were farmers. They decided to have a religious holiday after the fall harvest. That holiday became a New Year's celebration because fall is the end of the farmer's year of work.

After the crops were harvested, there was time to think about the way people were treating each other and whether their actions were right or wrong.

After several hundred more years, by the time of the Romans, the holiday became known as Rosh Hashonah and was thought to be the time of year that each person's behavior of the past year was evaluated.

Why do we speak and sing in Hebrew and Yiddish and Ladino when we cannot always understand the words?

The Jewish people are an ancient people, almost 6000 years old. We have a rich heritage that spans over all those millennia and over many different countries. The Jewish people speak many languages. Language is how we communicate love, passion, frustration, and despair. It is how we tell our histories and maintain our cultures. Language is an expression of community and unity.

Hebrew is the language of the Torah, the language of rituals that have resonated for generations. From these rituals and from Torah, Jews found the strength to endure and to triumph over many hardships through the centuries.

Yiddish is the language that Ashkenazic Jews spoke in their homes and in the streets of eastern Europe, the language in which great Jewish writers conveyed new humanist and secular ideas. Yiddish is the language that we spoke as immigrants and as activist Jews in movements for social change on both sides of the Atlantic, the language of the American Jewish labor movement, the language that connects us to our Jewish culture today.

-adapted from Ellen Cassedy

Ladino is the language of Sephardic Jews, the Jews of Spain, who were expelled from Spain in 1492. Sephardic Jews then migrated to Northwestern Europe, North Africa, and the Ottoman Empire. The earliest Jewish communities in the New World were established by Sephardim. Following the waves of immigration of Ashkenazic Jews from Eastern Europe in the 19th and 20th centuries, many Ashkenazic Jews have no awareness of the great contributions of their Sephardic cousins to the history of the United States and the culture of the world.

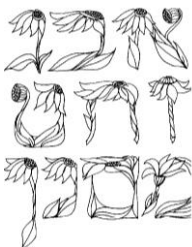
Yiddish and Ladino are now exotic, endangered. They are precious treasures that we must honor and keep alive, for ourselves and fun dor tsu dor, de generacion en generacion, from generation to generation.

(Class sits)

[Hebrew has evolved over the millennia, especially when it became the language of the state of Israel. In modern Hebrew, pronunciation changed from the traditional Ashkenazic of our ancestors to the contemporary use of Sephardic spoken Hebrew. Yiddish retains the Ashkenazic pronunciation of Hebrew words, which is why we say Shabes instead of Shabbat, Yom Kippur instead of Yom Kippur, and Leshone Toyve instead of Leshonah Tovah.]

Di Sapozhkelekh

(Nign)



The Ancient Words

The ancient words,
I don't understand them.
They are in a language I do not know.
Why are they so familiar?

There is a rhythm to them,
A beat, a pulse I understand
From somewhere very deep inside me,
My heart, my soul.
I am connected to a past I never lived
And to a future I shall not know.

A member of the human race,
Running through my time
And still connected to many lives which came before me.
So many cultures, faces, tears and joys,
A Jew, connected
To the past, to a future.

Hoping always
 That peace and love will finally come to all the world,
 That we may really live with no barriers
 And each of us, in the comfort and beauty of our varied
 Traditions.

Long before I understood what it means to be Jewish,
 I knew that I was a part of something larger than myself,
 Beyond my comprehension.

I think of my family, and my friends,
 My people, and all the people of the world.
 The living, and those who live on in our hearts and minds,
 Of the earth, and all its creatures
 Of our universe.

And I am reminded of my responsibility
 To fulfill the promise of peace
 While I am on earth—Shalom.

-adapted from Emily Dina Ruth Maltz

Tish Nign *(Instrumental)*

Tashlikh

An ancient Rosh Hashonah ritual is called Tashlikh, from the Hebrew word meaning “to cast away” and from the Biblical phrase “cast off our sins into the depths of the seas.” We throw crumbs from our pockets into a stream of running water, symbolizing the spiritual act of shaking sins from the soul.

We may be burdened with regrets, disappointments, old thinking, missed opportunities, excuses or rationalizations. Imagine these burdensome, useless things in the form of crumbs in our pockets. Heavy crumbs that weigh us down.

Then imagine standing on the banks of the Charles River, and reaching deep into our pockets, and grabbing hold of those miserable crumbs, and casting them into the current. Then imagine, freed of this burden, with empty pockets, moving lightly, freely, into the New Year.

Turn to the person next to you and share one thing that you want to unburden or release in the next year.



Healing River

(Fran Minkoff and Fred Hellerman)

Oh healing river, send down your waters,
Send down your waters upon this land.
Oh healing river, send down your waters,
And wash the blood from off the sand.

Oh seed of freedom, awake and flourish,
Let the deep roots nourish, let the tall stalks rise.
Oh seed of freedom, awake and flourish,
Proud leaves uncurling up to the skies.

Unetannah Tokef

[One thousand years ago a prayer, central to the meaning of Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur, was written. It is called Unetannah Tokef and is found in the traditional Makhzor, or High Holiday Prayer Book.]

On Rosh Hashonah will be inscribed,
And on Yom Kippur will be sealed:
How many will pass from the earth and how many will be created,
Who will live and who will die,
Who will die at his predestined time and who before his time,
Who will rest and who will wander,
Who will live in harmony and who will be harried,
Who will enjoy tranquility and who will suffer,
Who will be impoverished and who will be enriched,
Who will be humbled and who will be exalted.



Unetannah Tokef tells us that what we are shapes what we become — the child is parent to the adult. But it also says that we are capable of changing the outcome, and this is done by Tefillah, Tsedokah, and Teshuvah.

Tefillah, commonly translated as prayer, is really derived from the word for honest self-judgment.

Tsedokah, commonly translated as charity, is derived from the word Tsadik, a just person. It means justice to others.

Teshuvah means turning, but is commonly translated as repentance, usually meaning repentance from a sin, or Khet.

The word Khet has its origins in archery, and the term originally meant missing the mark. Such is the Jewish concept of sin — the missing of one's goal, losing sight of the important things in life and to oneself.

Teshuvah, then, really means turning, turning to hit the mark, to achieve what is important in life and to ourselves.

These images — honest self-reflection, justice to others, and turning — form the central theme of our secular makhzor today.

In keeping with Jewish tradition, on Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur we ask ourselves if we have hit the mark — as individuals, as members of families, and as members of our communities. Whether we look for answers through prayer or through our own varied forms of secular or spiritual practice, the question remains important and relevant for all of us.

There is a Wall
(*Charlie King*)

There is a wall
And it's the tallest wall of all.
They named a street for it
Where numbers roll and eyes go black.
A wall of gold,
They buy the future with the past.
They call it work,
Just feels like money in the bank.

And way down at the foot of that wall,
Where the guards can barely see her at all,
A woman is standing, not asking not demanding,
A poor woman is standing with a hammer in her hand.

Refrain:

Don't you want a piece of that wall when it comes down?
 Don't you want to live to see it fall when it comes around?
 When that wall is gone no matter which side you were on,
 Can you say you took a piece of that wall down?
 Don't you want a piece of that wall?

There is a wall
 And it's the meanest wall of all,
 Stretched from my doorstep
 Straight back to 1492.
 It hides the ovens, it hides the settlements, the homelands,
 Pink triangles, passbooks, shackles, and tattoos.

And way down at the foot of that wall
 Where the guards can barely see him at all,
 An old man is standing, not asking not demanding,
 An old black man is standing with a hammer in his hand.

Refrain

There is a wall
 And it's the oldest wall of all,
 A wall of fear holds danger out - desire in,
 A wall that bristles each time the warden brings back tales,
 Inside we're starving, to buy the bricks to build the cells
 To bury love to bar the door to ban the stranger.

And way down at the foot of that wall
 Where the guards can barely see at all,
 A stranger is standing, not asking not demanding
 A stranger is standing with a hammer for your hand.

Refrain

By joining together today, we embrace a tradition over 3000 years old and benefit from a conviction that the New Year can be a creative moment. Together we help each other find the courage and time to "turn."

Turning

Now is the time for turning.
 The leaves are beginning to turn from green to red and orange.
 The birds are beginning to turn and are heading once more toward the south.
 The animals are beginning to turn to storing their food for the winter.
 For leaves, birds, and animals, turning comes instinctively.
 But for us turning does not come so easily.

It takes an act of will
For us to make a turn.

It means breaking with old habits
It means admitting that we have been wrong;
And this is never easy.
It means losing face;
It means starting all over again;
And this is always painful.

It means saying: "I am sorry."
It means admitting that we have the ability to change;
And this is always embarrassing.

These things are terribly hard to do.
But unless we turn, we will be trapped forever
In yesterday's ways.

-Jack Riemer

A Community of Memory

Our common memory holds us together, despite war, persecution, and diaspora. Consider that our tradition does not require official clergy to lead prayer — a minyan of ten suffices. Thus, community is central to the practice of Judaism. It is noteworthy that on the Days of Awe, no deity can give complete forgiveness; only another person can forgive us for the hurt we have caused them. This is the community of people that Judaism embraces. It is through this connection to community that we pass on our traditions.

I.L. Peretz, a leading Yiddish writer for whom our Shule is named, wrote:

A people without a memory is like an individual with amnesia. An individual is not a free, single dot in the universe. An individual is a ringlet in the net which is spread over a certain spot on earth. The net is an individual's generation. And a person's generation is just a ringlet in the chain of generations that reaches back to the Patriarch Abraham and extends onward to the end of time.

We Jews are a community by virtue of historic memory. We have been held together and upheld by common remembering. Memory performs the impossible for us; it holds together the past and present and gives continuity and dignity to human life.

The Tent of Abraham, Hagar, and Sarah

We are all in this world together, there is no us and them.

-Reverend Liz Walker

We continue to find ourselves in a time when religious conflict and violence have reemerged, bearing lethal dangers for all of us and for our planet. Jews, Muslims, and Christians are all part of the Abrahamic tradition and share a common ancestry.

We are reminded of Abraham, Hagar, and Sarah who, according to tradition, kept their tent open in all four directions, the more easily to share their food and water with travelers from anywhere. In that spirit, we welcome all those who thirst and hunger for a place to live and raise their families with peace, justice and dignity. Let us all carry that capacious tent in our hearts, and keep it open to those who seem different from us. Our traditions teach us to have compassion, seek justice, and pursue peace for all peoples.

We all bear especially deep concern for the region where Abraham grew and learned, taught and flourished. Today that region stretches from Iraq, where Abraham grew up, to Israel and Palestine, where he sojourned, and to Mecca and Egypt, where he visited. Today our hearts are broken by the violence poured out upon the peoples of that broad region.

From all four corners of the tent come peoples who teach that security and peace will come from sharing the truth that we are all vulnerable, all fragile, all connected to each other and the earth. To that end we renew our efforts to protect human rights, heal the earth, and -- in the regions where Abraham, Hagar, and Sarah sojourned -- seek peace.

Shalom, salaam, peace.

-adapted from Rabbi Arthur Waskow/Shalom Center

In the tradition of the tent, we also turn our hearts and minds to the immigrants of our own land. We remember when our own families were new to this land, or were forced to leave a beloved home, or were asked to make room for strangers. All of us in some way, at some time, have looked for welcome and a safe haven.

Many of us came to these shores over a period of three and half centuries, from the residue of the Inquisition, from the Czarist pogroms, from the Nazi terror. At those times, we were strangers, people who were perceived as different. Our differences were gifts we brought to the many others who at one point in their history were also immigrants. Now it's our turn to be the host, to welcome new waves of immigrants who seek much the same as we did. We welcome their gifts as ways to enrich our culture and make us all citizens of the world.

Our earth is round, and, among other things, that means that you and I can hold completely different points of view and both be right. The difference of our positions will show stars in your window I cannot even imagine. Your sky may burn with light, while mine, at the same moment, spreads beautiful to darkness. Still we must choose how we separately corner the circling universe of our experience. Once chosen, our cornering will determine the message of any star and darkness we encounter.

- June Jordan

Peace Salaam Shalom
(Pat Humphries)

A Secular Amidah

[The Amidah, also called the Shemoneh Esray, or Eighteen Blessings, is the central prayer in the Jewish service. The traditional liturgy is a series of praises and sanctifications of God; it offers thanks for life; it asks for peace; it asks for help in being kind to our fellow people. It offers us a time of reflection and self-examination.]

(All are invited to rise and read aloud together.)

Let us ask ourselves hard questions
For this is the time for truth.
 How much time did we waste
 In the year that is now gone?
Did we fill our days with life
Or were they dull and empty?
 Was there love inside our home
 Or was the affectionate word left unsaid?
Was there real companionship with our children
Or was there living together and a growing apart?
 Were we a help to our mates
 Or did we take them for granted?
How was it with our friends:
Were we there when they needed us, or not?
 The kind deed: did we perform it or postpone it?
 The unnecessary gibe: did we say it or did we hold it back?
Did we deceive others?
Did we deceive ourselves?
 Did we respect the rights and feelings
 Of those who worked with us?
Did we acquire only possessions
Or did we acquire new insights as well?
 Did we fear what the crowd would say
 And keep quiet when we should have spoken out?
Did we mind only our own business
Or did we feel the heartbreak of others?
 Did we live right,
 And, if not,
 Then have we learned
 And will we change?

- Jack Riemer

(Be seated)

Please take this time to reflect silently on the year past, a positive memory, a personal accomplishment, a victory, a failure, an inspirational moment, a missed opportunity.

Flatbush Waltz
(*Instrumental*)

Shema

The Shema is often considered the singular statement of belief in Judaism. Many Jews have lived and died chanting these words. We sing the Shema today with many voices: to express our unity as a community, to maintain our connection with our history and traditions as we honor our connection to all people, and to honor the principle that we must all stay true to our own beliefs and speak them with pride and dedication. Let us sing together.

(*All rise and sing*)

Shema Yisroel Adonoy Elohenu Adonoy Ekhod

(*Be seated*)

Durme Durme
(*Ladino lullaby from Bosnia*)

Durme durme izhiko de madre,
Durme durme sin ansia y dolor,
Durme durme sin ansia y dolor.

Sienti joya palavrikas de tu madre,
Las palavras de Shema Yisrael,
Las palavras de Shema Yisrael.

Durme durme izhiko de madre,
Con ermozura de Shema Yisrael,
Con ermozura de Shema Yisrael.

(*Sleep, sleep free from worry and pain.
Listen to the words of the Shema.
Sleep with the beauty of the Shema.*)

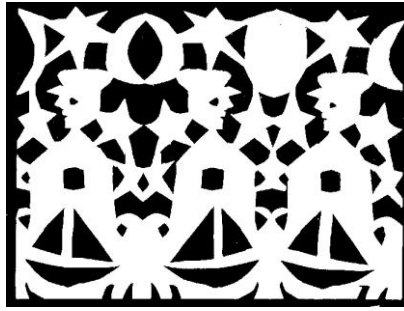
The Long Road

[After “four,” all are invited to gradually join in reading aloud together, with more and more joining in through the end]

Alone, you can fight,
 you can refuse, you can
 take what revenge you can
 But they roll over you.
 But two people fighting
 back to back can cut through
 a mob, a snake-dancing file
 can break a cordon, an army
 can meet an army.
 Two people can keep each other
 sane, can give support, conviction,
 love, massage, hope, sex.
 Three people are a delegation,
 a committee, a wedge. With four
 you can play bridge and start
 an organization. With six
 you can rent a whole house,
 eat a pie for dinner with no
 seconds, and hold a fund-raising party.
 A dozen can hold a demonstration.
 A hundred fill a hall.
 A thousand have solidarity and your own
 newsletter;
 ten thousand, power and your own paper;
 a hundred thousand, your own media;
 ten million, your own country.
 It goes one at a time,
 it starts when you care
 to act, it starts when you do
 it again after they said no,
 it starts when you say *We*
 and know who you mean, and each
 day you mean one more.



-Marge Piercy



A More Perfect Union
(*Jean Rohe*)

Atlantic and Pacific flow,
The Great Lakes and the Gulf of Mexico,
The land between sustains us all,
To cherish it, our tireless call.

Refrain:

Arise! Arise!
I see the future in your eyes.
To a more perfect union we aspire
And lift our voices from the fire.

We reached these shores from many lands,
We came with hungry hearts and hands,
Some came by force and some by will,
At the auction block, in the darkened mill.

Refrain

We died in the fields and the factories,
Strange fruit hangin' from the poplar trees,
With an old coat hanger in a room somewhere,
A trail of tears, an electric chair.

Refrain

Our great responsibility
To be guardians of our liberty,
'Til tyrants bow to the people's dream,
And justice flows like a mighty stream.

Refrain

Questions

Let us ask ourselves questions as a community.
For this is our time for truth.

Do we remember that violence in any neighborhood is violence in our own?

When we read about the dead in wars anywhere in the world, do we remember that every life is precious and every death a loss to all?

When we read about the dead in the Middle East, do we mourn only the ones we identify with, or do we know that each brutal death is tragic and that no side can win?
When we feel concern for the survival of the Jewish people, must we not at the same time care about the survival of the Palestinian people?

When we read about natural disasters anywhere on our planet, do we remember that the people who suffer are members of our own family — our human family?

Did we see injustice when done and oppose it?
Or were our eyes clouded by fear?
Did we feel the suffering of the oppressed
Or did we let our privilege protect our hearts?
Did we allow the oppression of others?
Did we live up to our Jewish values and heritage,
And regard all oppressed peoples as our brothers and sisters?

If we close our eyes,
Can we see the faces of the children on all sides of world conflicts?
Can we feel the heartbreak of others?
Did we raise our voices and speak out
Or did we let others speak for us?

Did we live right?
And if not,
What have we learned
And how will we change?

We live at any moment with our total past.
We hate with all our past hatreds.
We love with all our past loves.
Every sunset we have ever seen has formed our sense of the beautiful.
Every bar of music we have listened to is included in our response to the melody which now rings in our ears.
That is why it is so important to be cautious in what we make of each day.
It will live with us always.

-Ben Zion Bokser

Blowing the Shofar

The shofar is traditionally blown to announce the start of the New Year. We blow it to tell the people to think carefully about the year just past, and to be sorry for the things that they had done wrong.

The Shofar call for the New Year has three parts, and a very long blast at the end. They are:

Tekiah: This is the sounding of the alarm, the sound of remembrance. Another year of life has slipped away and we must ask ourselves what we have accomplished in that year.

Shevarim: The low note is a reminder that life may bring fear, frustration, tragedy, and sorrow. The high note is a note of hope that life will also bring us happiness and serenity.

Teruah: This is the call to arms asking each of us to make a personal commitment to work towards the liberation of all oppressed people, and for an end to exploitation and tyranny in all forms.

Call out the Shofar's notes and it will answer.
(*Shofar blasts after each part is named*)

Tekiah

May the sound of the Shofar awaken us to the flight of time
And summon us to spend our days with purpose.

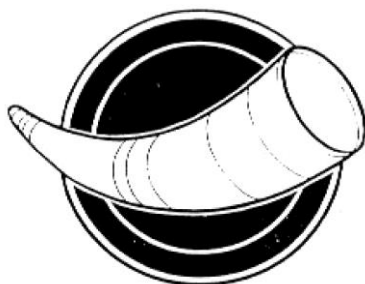
Shevarim

May the sound of the Shofar shatter our complacency
And make us conscious of our weaknesses and our strengths.

Teruah

May the sound of the Shofar remind us that it is time to "Proclaim liberty throughout the land and for all the inhabitants thereof."

Tekiah



Leshone Toyve

(words by Sh. Tseler, music by Chane Mlotek)

Mir bagrisn hoykh un klor: Leshone toyve, a gut yor! Mir bagrisn hoykh un klor: Leshone toyve, a gut yor!	מיר באַגריסן הויך און קלאַר: לשנה טובה, אַ גוט יאָר! מיר באַגריסן הויך און קלאַר: לשנה טובה, אַ גוט יאָר!
Mir bagrisn un mir vintshn Ale kinder, hoykh un klor: Leshone toyve tikoseyvu A gut yor! A gut yor! Leshone toyve tikoseyvu A gut yor! A gut yor!	מיר באַגריסן און מיר ווינטשן אַלע קינדער, הויך און קלאַר: לשנה טובה תכתבו אַ גוט יאָר! אַ גוט יאָר! לשנה טובה תכתבו אַ גוט יאָר! אַ גוט יאָר!
Tates, mames, dem gantsn dor, Leshone toyve, a gut yor! Tates, mames, dem gantsn dor Leshone toyve, a gut yor!	טאַטעס, מאַמעס, דעם גאַנצן דאָר, לשנה טובה, אַ גוט יאָר! טאַטעס, מאַמעס, דעם גאַנצן דאָר, לשנה טובה, אַ גוט יאָר!
Tates, mames, shvester, brider, Kroyvim, fraynd, dem gantsn dor: Leshone toyve Kol Yisroel A gut yor! A gut yor! Leshone toyve Kol Yisroel A gut yor! A gut yor!	טאַטעס, מאַמעס, שוועסטער, ברידער, קרויַם, פֿרײַנד, דעם גאַנצן דאָר: לשנה טובה, אַ גוט יאָר! טאַטעס, מאַמעס, שוועסטער, ברידער, קרויַם, פֿרײַנד, דעם גאַנצן דאָר: לשנה טובה, אַ גוט יאָר!
(We send greetings loud and clear: Leshone toyve, a good year.	(We send greetings to all children, loud and clear: Leshone toyve tikoseyvu, a good year.
Fathers, mothers, sisters, brothers, family, friends, the whole generation: Leshone toyve, a good year, a good year!)	

Mi Shebeyrakh

[Mi Shebeyrakh is that part of the traditional service where the rabbi calls up those wishing to have healing and supportive words said for the sick.]

A wonderful benefit of being in a community is that it cuts through our isolation, especially in sad times, difficult times, or challenging times.

All those who have family and friends who are ill or in need, we invite you to stand as we play the music for Mi Shebeyrakh. May you and your loved ones be supported and comforted in this time of need.

(Instrumental)

(Mi shebeyrakh avoteynu, m'kor habrokha l'imoteynu. May the love we shared with those who came before us help us find the courage to make our lives a blessing.)

(Be seated)

Yizkor

At Rosh Hashonah and Yom Kippur, we set aside a special time for remembering the dead. We recite Yizkor to remember those who have gone before, and to remind ourselves how we should live.

(All rise and read together the following six lines)

This is the time we remember
Those who gave meaning to our lives.
This is the time we remember
The bonds that tied us together,
The love that we shared,
And the memories that remain with us still.

They are now part of the eternity that is human memory. In silence, we contemplate the empty spaces their deaths have left in our lives. In silence, we celebrate the spaces in our lives that they made richer, fuller, happier, more loving, and deeper in meaning. We mourn their deaths as we celebrate their lives, as we affirm life itself.

In silence, we remember our family and friends who have passed away. At Yom Kippur, we will say these names aloud.

(Observe a moment of silence)

Shnirele Perele

(Instrumental)

(Be seated)

My Hereafter

Do not come when I am dead
 To sit beside a low green mound,
 Or bring the first gay daffodils,
 Because I love them so,
 For I shall not be there.
 You cannot find me there.
 Where will I be?
 I will be reflected from the bright eyes of little children;
 In the smile of a bride under the khupah;
 In the flames of Shabbat candles at the family simkha.
 I will warm your hands through the glow
 Of the winter fire;
 I will soothe you with the drop
 Of the rain on the roof;
 I will speak to you out of the wisdom
 Of the sages;
 And make your heart leap with the
 Rhythm of a hora;
 I will flood your soul with the flaming radiance
 Of the sunrise,
 And bring you peace in the tender rose and gold
 Of the after-sunset.
 All these have made me happy.
 They are a part of me;
 I shall become a part of them.

--Juanita De Long

May our lives be worthy of remembrance and provide sustenance and purpose to others after we die. Thus the lives of those before us, our own lives, and those who live to continue the work after us will be linked for all time.

Kaddish

It is an ancient custom to kindle a yortsayt candle and recite Kaddish for the departed.
 We invite you to rise to say Kaddish.



Yis'ga'dal v'yis'kadash sh'mey rabbo,
b'olmo dee'vro khir'usey v'yamlikh
malkhu'sey, b'khayaykhon uv'yomey'khon
uv'khayey d'khol beys yisroel, ba'agolo
u'viz'man koriv; v'imru omeyn.

Y'hey shmey rabbo m'vorakh l'olam
ul'olmey olmayo.

Yisborakh v'yishtabakh v'yispoar
v'yisromam v'yisnasey, v'yishador
v'yis'aleh v'yis'alal, shmey d'kudsho, brikh
hu, l'eylo min kol birkhoso v'sheeroso,
tush'bekhoso v'nekhemoso, da'ameeran
b'olmo; vimru omeyn.

Y'hey shlomo rabbo min sh'mayo,
v'khayim oleynu v'al kol yisroel; v'imru
omeyn.

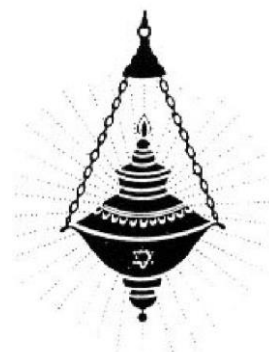
Oseh sholom bimromov, hu ya'aseh
sholom oleynu, v'al kol yisroel; v'imru
omeyn.

(Be seated)

Their Memories Shine Light On Our World

There are stars whose radiance is visible on earth
even though they themselves have disintegrated.
And there are people whose memory continues to
light the world after they have passed from it.
These lights shine brightest in the darkest night.
They light the path for us.

-Hannah Senesh



Zokhreynu

(Remember us to life)

(nign)

יִתְגַּדֵּל וַיִּתְקַדַּשׁ שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא. בְּעֶלְמָא דִּי בְרָא
בְּרַעוּתָהּ וַיִּמְלִיךָ מַלְכוּתָהּ בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן
וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל בְּעָגְלָא וּבְזִמְנָן קָרִיב.
וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

יְהֵא שְׁמֵהּ רַבָּא מְבָרַךְ לְעָלְמָא וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וַיִּשְׁתַּבַּח וַיִּתְפָּאֵר וַיִּתְרוֹמֵם וַיִּתְנַשֵּׂא
וַיִּתְהַדָּר וַיִּתְעַלֶּה וַיִּתְהַלֵּל שְׁמֵהּ דְּקֻדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ
הוּא. לְעֵלָא (וּלְעֵלָא) מִן כָּל בְּרַכְתָּא וְשִׁירְתָּא
תְּשַׁבְּחָתָא וְנִתְחַמְתָּא דְּאִמִּירָן בְּעֶלְמָא. וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:
יְהֵא שְׁלָמָא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל
יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

עֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם בְּמִרְוֵמֵי הוּא יַעֲשֵׂה שְׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ
וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל. וְאָמְרוּ אָמֵן:

If Not Higher

(abridged version of a story by I. L. Peretz)

And every year, just before the Days of Awe, the High Holy Days, the rabbi of Nemirov would vanish. He was not in the shul, nor in the study house, nor at home. Where can the rabbi be?

Un der nemirover flegt slikhes-tsayt yedn frimorgn nelm vern, farshvindn! Men flegt im nisht zen in ergets: nisht in shul, nisht in beyde bote-medroshim, nisht bay a minyen, un in der heym avade un avade nisht.... Vu ken zayn der rebe?

The people believed that the rabbi, so good was he, ascended to heaven to plead with God for the good health and fortune of the town's Jews in the year to come.

One day, a traveler came to Nemirov at this time of year. He heard the story of the rabbi disappearing and ascending to heaven, and was full of doubt. The doubting traveler quoted a passage of the Gemorah which said that even Moses did not ascend to heaven, but remained suspended two and a half feet below.

The traveler decided to follow the rabbi in secret to disprove the villagers. He hid near the rabbi's home, and in the earliest hour, before even the baker arose, the traveler saw the rabbi leave his house, dressed in tattered old clothes and carrying an ax. The rabbi walked for two hours until he came to a stand of trees. He took out his ax, chopped trees into small logs, tied them together with rope, and walked back toward town.

On the outskirts of town, the rabbi stopped at a beaten down house, half-hidden behind a stone ledge. He knocked on the door. "I have extra wood, my friend," said the rabbi. "Ah, dear woodcutter," replied the woman, "I am a poor widow with nothing to pay you." "It doesn't matter," said the rabbi. "Already it has gotten cold, and you will need a warm fire to heat your home." "Thank you, dear woodcutter. But I cannot even bend down to kindle the fire today, for I am ill." "I shall do it for you," said the rabbi. He laid the wood, struck a match, and as the flames spread their warmth through the house, he quietly said the Penitential Prayers that preceded Rosh Hashonah. The woman, hard of hearing, could not make sense of the rabbi's words, but the traveler could hear them from his hiding place outside the window.

So impressed was he that the doubting traveler moved to the village and became a follower of the rabbi of Nemirov. And ever after, when a follower of the rabbi tells how the rabbi ascends to heaven, the traveler quietly adds, "If not higher!"

Un shpeter, oyb a khosid hot amol dertseylt, az der nemirover hoybt zikh oyf, slikhes-tsayt, yedn frimorgn, un flit aroyf in himl arayn, flegt shoyen der litvak nisht lakhn, nor tsugebn shtilerheyt: "Oyb nisht nokh hekher!"

Etz Khayim

(Nign)

D'var

[Traditionally, the d'var is a commentary on the week's Torah portion. In our d'var, a member of our community is invited to provide personal reflections]

Common Threads

(Pat Humphries)

In a many colored garden
We are growing side by side.
We will rise all together, we will rise.
With the sun and rain upon us,
Not a row shall be denied.
We will rise all together, we will rise.

We will rise like the ocean, we will rise like the sun,
We will rise all together, we will rise.
In our many colored fabrics, made from strands of common threads,
We will rise all together, we will rise.

In the cold of fear and hatred,
Clothed in dignity we stand.
We will rise all together, we will rise.
We have pieced this quilt together
Linking hearts with stitching hands,
We will rise all together, we will rise.

We will rise like the ocean, we will rise like the sun,
We will rise all together, we will rise.
We are spirits drawn together tightly by our common threads,
We will rise all together, we will rise.

From our children to our elders,
From all nations, we will rise.
We will rise all together, we will rise.
May respect for all our differences
Enhance our common ties.
We will rise all together, we will rise.

We will rise like the ocean, we will rise like the sun,
We will rise all together, we will rise.
We will build a global family strengthened by our common threads.
We will rise all together, we will rise.

Greetings to Our Community



This Is the Beginning of the New Year

Today begins the Ten Days of Awe, the period from Rosh Hashonah to Yom Kippur, ten days in which we reflect on the year we have just concluded, and prepare for the year before us. For us, as for our ancestors, this ten-day period presents us with time and space for honest self-reflection, forgiveness, healing, and turning anew to better hit the mark and live a life of doing justice to others.

This is the beginning of the New Year.
 We have this year
 to use as we will.
 We can waste it,
 or grow in its light
 and be of service to others.
 But what we do
 with this year is important
 because we will have exchanged
 a year of our lives for it.
 The last year is now.
 May we not regret the price paid for it.

May we create for ourselves, our family, friends, and community a year of health, happiness, and peace. We especially take this time to welcome people who are here for the first time. We look forward to meeting you at the pot luck afterward.

At the end of the service we will eat apples and honey. The honey symbolizes our hope for sweetness in the year ahead. We will then share a holiday meal.

And now we turn to our neighbor and say:

May you be inscribed and sealed for a good year.

A gut yontef, A gut yor.

Ale Brider

(All Brothers [and Sisters])

[This song has traditionally been sung at progressive and secular Jewish gatherings, and is closely associated with the Jewish labor movement. It has become a voice for the unity of purpose and the harmony among people. Ale Brider is based on the poem "Akhedes," or "Brotherhood," by Morris Winchevsky.]

Refrain: Day day day day....

און מיר זינגען אַלע ברידער,

Un mir zaynen ale brider,
Oy, oy, ale brider,
Un mir zingen freylekhe lider,
Oy, oy, oy.
Un mir haltn zikh in eynem,
Oy, oy, zikh in eynem.
Azelkhes iz nito bay keynem,
Oy, oy, oy.

אוי, אוי, אַלע ברידער,
און מיר זינגען פֿריילעכע לידער,
אוי, אוי, אוי.
און מיר האַלטן זיך אין איינעם,
אוי, אוי, זיך אין איינעם.

Day day day day....

אַזעלכעס איז ניטאָ בײַ קיינעם

Un mir zaynen ale shvester,
Oy, oy, ale shvester,
Vi Sore, Rivke, Rut, un Ester,
Oy, oy, oy.
Un mir zaynen ale eynik,
Oy, oy, ale eynik,
Tsi mir zaynen fil tsi veynik,
Oy, oy, oy.

אוי, אוי, אוי.
און מיר זינגען אַלע שוועסטער,
אוי, אוי, אַלע שוועסטער.
ווי שרה, רבקה, רות און אסתר,
אוי, אוי, אוי.

Day day day day....

Un mir libn zikh dokh ale,
 Oy, oy, zikh dokh ale,
 Vi a khosn mit a kale,
 Oy, oy, oy.
 Un mir zaynen ale freylekh
 Oy, oy, ale freylekh
 Vi Yoynosn un Dovid hameylekh,
 Oy, oy, oy.

Day day day day....

*And we are all brothers and sisters
 and sing happy songs.*

*And we are all sisters like Sarah,
 Rebecca, Ruth and Esther.
 And we are all united, whether we
 are many or few.*

*And we all love each other
 Like a bridegroom and bride.*

*And we are all gay
 Like Jonathan and King David.*

און מיר זינגען אַלע אייניק,

אוי, אוי, אַלע אייניק,

צי מיר זינגען פֿיל צי ווייניק,

אוי, אוי, אוי.

און מיר ליבן זיך דאָך אַלע,

אוי, אוי, זיך דאָך אַלע,

ווי אַ חתן מיט אַ כלה,

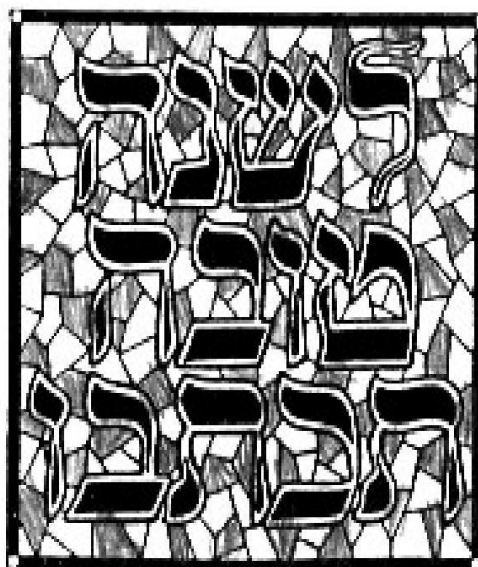
אוי, אוי, אוי.

און מיר זינגען אַלע פֿריילעך,

אוי, אוי, אַלע פֿריילעך,

ווי יהונתן און דוד המלך,

אוי, אוי, אוי.





BOSTON WORKMEN'S CIRCLE
CENTER FOR
JEWISH CULTURE
& SOCIAL JUSTICE

Cultural heritage and progressive values
inspiring community, learning, and activism

SECULAR JEWISH COMMUNITY • YIDDISH CULTURE • SOCIAL AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE

Holiday Celebrations and Observances

Come together as a community on major Jewish holidays and historic anniversaries. Secular programs offered on Rosh Hashonah, Yom Kippur, Sukes, Chanukah, Tu B'Shvat, Purim, Passover.

Shule

A Secular, progressive Jewish cultural school for children ages 5-13. Teaches Jewish culture and history rooted in a universal commitment to freedom and justice, culminating in a collective bar/bat mitzvah ceremony.

A Besere Velt (A Better World), Yiddish Community Chorus

A multi-generational "voice for justice." No auditions and no prior knowledge of Yiddish required.

Social Action

Learn, organize, sing, and march for justice. Ongoing activities include children's protest against sweatshops, Mideast peace, economic justice, and local Jewish-Muslim relations.

Circle Playtime

A monthly program with activities and singing for children ages 0-5 and their parents.

Adult Jewish Education

Courses on Jewish history, thought, and practice from a secular perspective.

Sunday Kumzitz

A bagel brunch featuring speakers and discussion on a variety of social issues and historical and cultural topics.

2nd Friday Shabes Potlucks

A monthly gathering to take a breath at the end of the week and share community with friends and family.

Young Adult Initiative

Join folks in their 20s and 30s who, inspired by the history of the Workmen's Circle as a mutual aid society, build new forms of collective support and social action.

Inspiring Generations

A capital campaign to invest in social, environmental, and financial sustainability for future generations of Boston Workmen's Circle.

Yiddish Language Classes

Beginner, intermediate, and advanced levels.

Yiddish Lectures

Stretch your mind – and your Yiddish.

Yiddish Vinkl

Informal monthly conversation groups in a variety of locations.

Yiddish Sing

An informal monthly sing-along for Yiddish and non-Yiddish speakers.

Circle Book Group

Monthly readings and discussion.

Klezmer Jam

A monthly drop-in guided klezmer jam for all instruments, all levels.

Teens Acting for Social Change

A youth group focused on social justice issues and action.

WE WELCOME YOU!

Please get in touch for
more information about
any of these activities.

Please share your thoughts and ideas on this holiday program!! RH2013

Please use this page to make comments and suggestions on this ritual and/or to volunteer to help with our holiday celebrations. If you fill out this page, please give it to one of the Workmen's Circle volunteers or mail it to Linda Gritz, Chair, Ritual Committee, Boston Workmen's Circle, 1762 Beacon St., Brookline, MA 02445-2124.

Thank you very much for attending our holiday celebrations and for taking the time to share your thoughts and ideas.

This program was created by the Workmen's Circle Ritual Committee and is updated each year. We welcome your comments and suggestions for next year's rituals.

The Ritual Committee creates and updates Workmen's Circle rituals, currently including Rosh Hashonah, Yom Kippur, Tu B'Shvat, Passover, and Shabbes. If you are interested in participating in this work, please sign up below. We welcome new members!

NAME: _____

ADDRESS: _____

PHONE NUMBER: _____

EMAIL ADDRESS: _____