

Selichot

The Selichot prayers are penitential prayers said before and during the High Holy Days and other fast days throughout the year. In Hebrew, selichot translates to “forgiveness,” and indeed there is an emphasis in these prayers on the merciful attributes with which G-d is said to govern the world. We begin and end the season of repentance with the same words, calling out to the compassionate G-d who we hope will accept our prayers. Our tradition begins with Selichot on the Saturday evening just before Rosh HaShanah. Prayers are read and sung with meditations considered as individuals are encouraged to reflect on the past year and the changes they wish to make in the upcoming one.

Rosh HaShanah

Rosh HaShanah is the first day of the lunar month of Tishrei according to the Hebrew calendar. On this day forgiveness of sins is also asked of G-d. It is both a time of rejoicing and of serious introspection, a time to celebrate the completion of another year while also taking stock of one's life.

Tashlich

Jews traditionally proceed to a body of running water, preferably one containing fish, and symbolically cast off (tashlich) their sins. The ceremony includes reading the source passage for the practice, the last verses from the prophet Micah (7:19), “He will take us back in love; He will cover up our iniquities. You will cast all their sins into the depths of the sea.” *This is one of the most popular observances of Rosh Hashana – especially for cities like Salem that love the outdoors!*

Pre-Yom Kippur Cemetery Service

There is a long-standing tradition to visit the graves of loved ones and pious individuals before Yom Kippur. This is a beautiful, communal experience of honoring those who z”l have passed away – both those we knew and those we did not. We will meet at the Albany Hebrew Cemetery (3013-3099 SE Salem Ave, Albany, OR 97321) for this short service.

Shabbat Shuva

The Shabbat that falls during the week between Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur is called Shabbat Shuva, or the Sabbath of Return, but Shabbat Shuva is also a pun. Shuva, sounds very much like teshuva, or repentance, another core concept of the High Holy Days.

Yom Kippur

Yom Kippur completes the annual period known in Judaism as the High Holy Days or Yamim Nora'im ("Days of Awe"). The Day of Atonement, the holiest day on the Jewish calendar, is a time set aside to repent for sins and to reflect on the year past and the year to come. Jews generally attend synagogue, with readings from the Torah, and fast for 24 hours.

At TBS Yom Kippur begins on Sunday, September 24 with Kol Nidre. This communal prayer takes place prior to sunset on the evening of Yom Kippur. This service is called Kol Nidrei ("All Vows"). These are the first words of a special legal formula that is recited at the beginning of this service and is chanted three times. This legal ritual is believed to have developed in early medieval times because of persecutions against the Jews.

This ancient ceremony found a special place in the hearts of the Jewish people and has been maintained for centuries as an especially solemn and moving introduction to the holiday evening service of Yom Kippur. Erev [the evening of] Yom Kippur is the only night of the entire Jewish calendar when a tallit (prayer shawl) is worn in the evening. It is traditional to wear a tallit or a white garment for the whole of the holiday, the color white symbolizing both our spiritual purity and our withdrawal from the vanities of this world.

Yizkor

Yizkor means... ["may (G-d) remember,"] from the root word zachor—remember. It is the memorial service. Its primary purpose is to remember the deceased. Traditionally, giving Tzedakah (charity) focuses on the theory that the good deeds of the survivors elevate the souls of the departed. It also enhanced the chances for personal atonement by doing a deed of lovingkindness.

Break-the-Fast

It is a tradition at TBS to break the fast as a community. This is a potluck that everyone is invited to bring a dairy, fish, or vegetarian dish to share with the community.

Sukkot

Sukkot: Beginning five days after Yom Kippur, Sukkot is named after the booths or huts (Sukkot in Hebrew) in which Jews are supposed to dwell during this week-long celebration. According to rabbinic tradition, these flimsy Sukkot represent the huts in which the Israelites dwelt during their 40 years of wandering in the desert after escaping from slavery in Egypt. Much of the imagery and ritual of the holiday revolves around rejoicing and thanking G-d for the completed harvest.

First we need to build our community Sukkah. Bring your tools and spend the morning building the TBS Sukkah. The TBS Sukkah may be used during the week of Sukkot by congregants for any meal to facilitate observing the commandment to “dwell in a Sukkah” during this time.

Simchat Torah

It is a joyous holiday that celebrates the Jewish love of Torah and study. Simchat Torah is celebrated by taking all the Torah scrolls out of the ark in synagogue and spending the evening dancing, singing, and rejoicing. The scrolls are carried around the sanctuary in seven circles called hakafot. It is our tradition to give miniature Torahs to all students new to Baneinu students. Join us for outdoor services at TBS.