



*Kahal B'raira /*  
community of choice

Congregation for Humanistic Judaism

# *Yom Kippur*

*Family Service*





READER:

Behold how good and pleasant it is for people to come together in unity and peace.

SONG: *Hiney ma tov*

Hin-nay mah tov oo-mah-nah-eem  
Sheh-vet a-kheem gam yah-khad (repeat)

READER:

If people are going to live together in a community, it's important to have ideas about what's right and what's wrong. We know lots of rules. For instance, cars must stop at a red light so we can cross safely. People mustn't hurt each other, or take things that don't belong to them. In a room like this, we must sit quietly so that everyone can hear what's going on

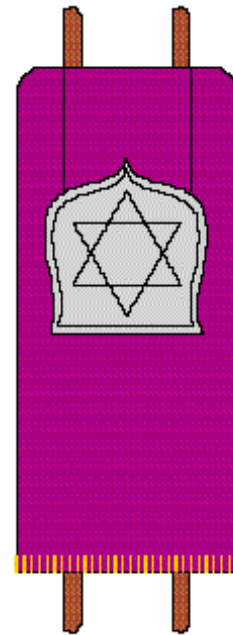
Let us think a little about all the ideas that guide our lives.

READER:

In the Torah, the stories that were told about Moses and the beginnings of the Jewish people, there are 613 rules! There were the things they thought were important if they were to live together as a people. Long ago, the Jewish sages and their students studied these and came up with even more things that were important to remember, and they studied those things too, and so on. Sometimes, they got so busy studying that they forgot *why*, the rules had been invented... The rules were really there so that people, like you and I, could live happily together!

A very old story tells of a man who came to a place where some Jewish people and their leader were studying. The man said, "I'll convert, I'll become Jewish, if you will teach me all your rules while I stand on one foot." Their leader laughed and said, "It would take you years to learn our rules." He sent the man away.

The man went on and came to another group of Jewish people were studying with a wise and gentle teacher named Hillel. The man said again, "I'll convert, I'll become Jewish, if you will teach me all your rules while I stand on one foot." Hillel said to him, "What is hateful to you, do not do to



others. That is our most important rule. All the other rules follow from it. Now come join us and learn.”

**ALL:**

When we are not sure how to treat others, we can remember Hillel’s rule. We can ask ourselves, “How would I want to be treated? How would I feel?” This can help us to treat others the way we would like to be treated ourselves.

## **INTROSPECTION**

**READER:**

Once a year, at this time, we pause to think about the rules that make our lives pleasant. We think back over what we did and how we acted during the past year. We think about those times we are proud of -- and also about those times we are not so proud of.

**READERS FROM THE CONGREGATION:**

Did we love our family?  
or sometimes forget to say a kind word?

Did we share?  
Or just think of ourselves?

Did we help?  
Or let someone else do the work?

Did we reach out to someone who was lonely or unhappy?  
Or pretend not to notice?

Were we fair to others?  
Or were we sometimes dishonest?

Do we decide for ourselves what is right and wrong?  
Or do we just follow what others do?

## **SILENT MEDITATION**

MUSIC: *Olvee-nu Mal-kenu*

READER:

Sometimes people are good, and they do just what they should. But the very same people who are good sometimes Are the very same people who are bad sometimes. It's funny, but it's true. It's the same, isn't it, for me and you.

*Sometimes People Are Bad*  
Fred Rogers

READER:

There was once a poor widow who had many children. They were always begging for food, but she had none to give them.

One day, while she was walking through the fields, she found an egg. She called her children together. "Look, children," she announced joyfully. "I have found an egg. I promise you that we have nothing to worry about anymore."

"And being a wise woman, I will not let us eat the egg. I will ask our neighbor's permission to put it under her hen until it hatches into a baby chick."

"And we will not eat the baby chick, but will let it grow until it lays more eggs which will hatch into even more chicks."

"But we will not eat even these. Since I am such a wise woman, I will sell them and use the money to buy a cow. But we will not eat the cow. Instead, we will let it grow, and the cow will have baby calves."

"And since I am such a wise woman, I will sell them and use the money to buy a field. And soon we will have fields, and cows, and calves, and chickens, and eggs. And we will not be hungry anymore. I promise you."

As the poor widow spoke, she turned the egg round and round in her hands. Suddenly it slipped, fell to the ground and broke.

We are all like the country woman. We make many vows and promises. We say to ourselves, "I promise to do this," and "I promise to do that." But the days slip by, and often our promises do not lead to action.

READER

We make promises to our friends and family:

We promise our parents we will be helpful.

We promise our friends we will play fairly.

We promise our sisters and brothers we will share.

We promise our teachers we will try harder.

Sometimes we can't keep these promises. On Yom Kippur we have the chance to ask our friends and family to forgive us.

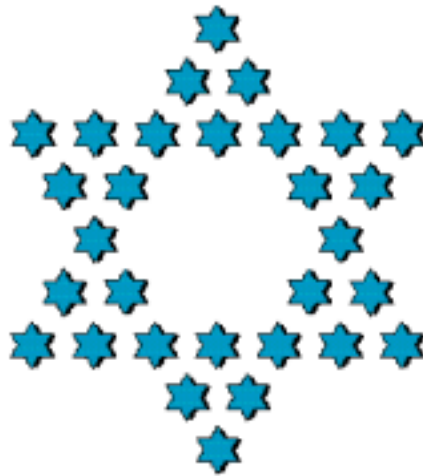
It is hard to ask forgiveness. It is hard to say, "I'm sorry." But it is important to say it and to mean it. It tells people we care about them.

It is even harder to forgive others when they hurt us. On Yom Kippur, just as we ask others to forgive us, we must try to forgive them. When someone says to us, "I'm sorry," we should say, "That's okay. Let's be friends again."

**READER:**

Thinking about what we have done wrong can make us feel both bad and good. We understand we share with all people the capacity to do bad things, and also that we can change ourselves to do good.

It is not easy to think about those times when we wish we had been kinder or more helpful or more fair - but it is important to think about those times so we can forgive ourselves and think about how we can improve in the coming year.



## **RESPONSIVE READING**

**READER:**

We come from an ancient heritage. Through all of Jewish history people have thought about what is right and wrong, and how we should lead our lives.

**CONGREGATION:**

We draw upon that heritage, as we strive to decide for ourselves what is right, this day and every day.

**READER:**

At this time of year, Jewish people all over the world seek forgiveness for their shortcomings.

**CONGREGATION:**

We ask forgiveness from those whom we may have hurt.

Let us forgive each other, and forgive ourselves, for we know that no one does what is right all of the time.

**READER:**

The new year will bring many hard challenges. There will be times when it will not be easy to do the right thing, to do the thing we want to do.

**CONGREGATION:**

Let us work, together and as individuals, for an even better year; Let us change, so that we will not be asking forgiveness for the same faults again on this day next year.

**READER:**

During the ten days since Rosh Hashana, we have been looking back, each of us alone, examining our own lives.

**CONGREGATION:**

Now we come together, to affirm our humanity, and look forward to a warm and loving year.

**SONG:        *Im Ayn Ah-nee Lee***

REFRAIN:

*Im ayn ah-nee le, mee lee?*

If I am not for myself, who will be for me?

*Ooh-sheh 'ah-nee l'ahts-mee, mah ah-nee?*

If I am only for myself, who am I?

*V'im loh ach-shahv, ay---mah-tie?*

And if not now, if not now, when?

Hillel was a rabbi , and he taught us what to do.

The first part of his lesson said: You must be true to you.

You have to like yourself if you expect that others should.

Having self-respect is something special, something good.

REFRAIN:

My self is very special, it's the place I have to start.

But Hillel said, we must make room for others in our heart.

Yes, love yourself, but care and share. Don't lock the others out.

Caring for yourself and others is what life is all about.

REFRAIN:

Life is short, the time flies by, and just before we know,

Today becomes last week and then a long, long time ago.

Hillel said, do what you must; Act now, today, don't wait!

Decide what is important; do it now, it's not too late.

REFRAIN:

## **POETRY READINGS**

**READER:**

As we celebrate our humanity, let us share some poetry. These pieces have been chosen to highlight the various in ways in which our lives are made full.

A poem about COOPERATION

I will not play at tug o'war  
I'd rather play at hug o'war,  
Where everyone hugs  
Instead of tugs,  
Where everyone giggles  
And rolls on the rug,  
Where everyone kisses,  
And everyone grins,  
And everyone cuddles,  
And everyone wins.

*Hug O'War*  
Shel Silverstein

a poem about WONDER

I gaze upon the beauty of the stars  
that cover the face of the sky  
And think of them as a garden of blossoms --  
Until the white dawn rises like a dove,  
From beneath the wings of a raven that flies away

*The Beauty of the Stars*  
Moses Ibn Ezra

a poem about GROWTH

"I love you,"  
said a great mother.  
"I love you for what you are  
knowing so well what you are.  
And I love you more yet, child,  
deeper yet than ever, child,  
for what you are going to be,  
knowing so well you are going far,  
knowing you great works are ahead,  
ahead and beyond,  
yonder and far over yet."

*Mother and Child*  
Carl Sandburg

a poem about BEAUTY

Beauty is a lily  
Sparkling and cool  
Its bowl of dewy petals  
Stemming in a pool

Meditate on beauty,  
Hold it, and look!  
Beauty shall be doubled,  
A lily in a brook.

*Reflection*  
Lew Sarrett

a poem about COMPASSION

Before I knew how cruel  
Just common talk can be,  
I thought that words were singing things  
With colors like the sea.

But since I've felt their caustic lash,  
And know how they can sting,  
I hold my breath when words go by  
For fear they will not sing.

*Gossip*  
Lexie Dean Robertson



a poem about LOVE

Someone's face was all frowned shut,  
All squeezed full of grimes and crinkles,  
Pouts and scowls and gloomers, but  
I could see behind the wrinkles, -

Even with her face a-twist  
I saw someone peeking through.  
And when someone's nose was kissed,  
Guess who came out giggling - YOU!

*Someone's Face*  
John Ciardi



a poem to celebrate INDIVIDUALISM

Two roads diverged in a yellow wood,  
And sorry I could not travel both  
And be one traveler, long I stood  
And looked down one as far as I could  
To where it bent in the undergrowth;

Then took the other, as just as fair,  
And having perhaps the better claim,  
Because it was grassy and wanted wear;  
Though as for that the passing there  
Had worn them really about the same,

And both that morning equally lay  
In leaves no step had trodden black.  
Oh, I kept the first for another day!  
Yet knowing how way leads on to way,  
I doubted if I should ever come back.

I shall be telling this with a sigh  
Somewhere ages and ages hence:  
Two roads diverged in a wood, and I -  
I took the one less traveled by,  
And that has made all the difference.

*The Road Not Taken*  
Robert Frost



a poem about ANGER

I'm so mad I could scream,  
I'm so mad I could spit  
Turn over a table,  
Run off in a snit!

I'm so mad I could yell,  
I could tear out my hair,  
Throw a rock through a window,  
Or wrestle a bear!

I mean - I am furious  
In a terrible buff,  
I'm raging and roaring  
And boy, am I tough!

I'm really ferocious,  
I really am mad,  
I'm ready to beat up  
My mother and dad!

On thinking it over  
I will not leave home,  
But I'll put all my anger  
Right here in this poem.

I'm feeling much better -  
Like peaches and cream -  
For a poem is the best way  
Of letting off steam!

*I'm So Mad I Could Scream*  
William Cole

a poem about SADNESS



Spring has come and the snow has gone  
A bird sits in its cage alone.

In the fields the reapers are never done.  
A bird sits in its cage alone.

The night descends, the sun has gone.  
A bird sits in its cage alone.

*Captive*  
Peretz Hirshbein

a poem about INDEPENDENCE

I never did, I never did, I never did like  
    "Now take care, dear!"  
I never did, I never did, I never did want  
    "Hold my hand!"  
I never did, I never did, I never did think much of  
    "Not up there, dear!";  
It's no good saying it. They don't understand.  
*Independence*  
A. A. Milne

And another

Sometimes, when you are cooking your mother,  
She burns, and you have to wait for her to cool down

*Anger*  
Sylvia Levine

a poem about HOPE

Well, son, I'll tell you:  
Life for me ain't been no crystal stair  
It's had tacks in it,  
And splinters,  
And boards torn up,  
And places with no carpet on the floor  
Bare.  
But all the time I'se been a-climbin' on,  
And reachin' landings,

And turnin' corners,  
 And sometimes goin' in the  
 dark  
 Where there ain't been no  
 light.  
 So, boy, don't you turn back.  
 Don't you set down on the  
 steps  
 ``Cause you finds it kinder  
 hard.  
 Don't you fall now -  
 For I'se still goin'', honey,  
 I'se still climbin'  
 And life for me ain't been no crystal stair



*Mother to Son*  
 Langston Hughes

*a poem about PEACE*



If there is to be peace in the  
 world,

*There must be peace in the  
 nations.*

If there is to be peace in the  
 nations,

*There must be peace in the cities.*

If there is to be peace in the  
 cities,

*There must be peace between  
 neighbors.*

If there is to be peace between  
 neighbors,

*There must be peace in the home.*

If there is to be peace in the home,  
*There must be peace in the heart.*

*If There Is To Be Peace*

Lao-Tse

*a poem about CONNECTION*

I shall pass this way but once.  
Any good thing therefore that I can do,  
Or any kindness that I can show  
to any human being,  
Let me do it now.  
Let me not defer it  
or neglect it,  
For I shall not pass this way again.

John Gilpin

**SONG: *Haida***

**READER:**

Now we'd like to share a story with you -- about these things we've been talking about: love, wonder, beauty, sorrow, work, happiness.

**STORY**

Music

## ANNOUNCEMENTS



**SONG: *Ay-foh O-Ree. Where Is My Light?***

Where is my light? My light is in me.

Where is my hope? My hope is in me.

Where is my strength? My strength is in me

And in you.

Ay-fo o-ree? O-ree bee.

Ay-fo tik-va-tee? Tik-va-tee bee.

Ay-fo ko-khee? Ko-khee bee.

V-gam b'khah.

## MEMORIAL SERVICE

### READER:

Yom Kippur is also the Day of Remembrance. On this thoughtful holiday we often recall those people, now dead, whose lives have influenced and inspired our own. Remembering offers both sadness and comfort. We miss these people while we cherish their memories.

*Members of the congregation are invited to offer names in memory*

### SONG: *Shalom Chaverim*

Sha-lom Cha-ver-im, Sha-lom Cha-ver-im,  
Sha-lom, Sha-lom. La-hit-rah-ot, la-hit-rah-ot,  
Sha-lom, Sha-lom.

### READER:

May all the peoples and races of the world learn to live together in peace and friendship. Let the day come when oppression, discrimination and prejudice will be forgotten, and all the world filled with the spirit of unity.

### CONGREGATION:

May that day soon come, the day foretold by our prophets and sages throughout generations, when all humanity Will recognize that it is one family.

### READER:

May the words of our mouths, and the promises of our hearts, become deeds; bringing fulfillment and hope.



## CONCLUSION

READER:

On this special day, we gather together and understand that we are all human, merely ordinary people. We may sometimes stumble -- everyone stumbles sometimes -- but it is a wonderful mark for which we are striving. We join together on this day in an affirmation of our strength and love for one another, as individuals and as a group.

SHOFAR:

T'kee-ah

READER:

As this service draws to a close, we pause for a final meditation.

Let the year upon which we have entered be, for us, for Jews everywhere, and for all of the peoples of the world:

A year of blessing and prosperity;

A year of good health and comfort;

A year which finds the hearts of the parents united with the hearts of the children;

A year of peace and contentment, of Joy and growth.

ALL:

May we have the strength to make it so.

SHOFAR:

T'kee-ah G'dolah

*L'Shanah Tovah.*