

Welcome

Leader:

Welcome and happy new year! *Shanah tovah!* We have come together – as family and friends, as congregation members and visitors, as people of diverse heritages – to join others throughout the world in celebrating Rosh Hashanah, New Year's Day in the Hebrew calendar, and the anniversary of the world's creation according to the Talmud (*Rabbi Eliezer, Tractate Rosh Hashanah 27a*).

All of us are here today because of our connection to the Jewish people through birth, choice, and association. As the first day of the Jewish year, Rosh Hashanah marks a turning point of hope between what was and what will be, between what is and what ought to be. We share with many a humanism that draws us together here in our common quest for moral self-assessment and self-correction.

As one year ends and another begins, we gather to each reflect upon our words and deeds, and to renew our commitments and efforts to improve ourselves and our world, to fulfill our human potential.

All:

We are here together today to celebrate another year of life and reflect on the year that is ending, on our milestones and our mistakes, our joys and our sorrows, on the lessons learned and the challenges and questions still to be faced.

Leader:

Let us begin by singing a song wishing peace and well-being to one another.

Song: Hevenu Shalom Aleikhem

Leader:

In most other festivals, the spirit is one of joy; yet Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are imbued with a seriousness born of the sense of responsibility that each of us bears for our own life and ethical choices. These days are also different in that they are not nature festivals, nor do they commemorate an historical event. Rather, they are observed respectively as the ceremonial beginning and ending points for a period of intensive reflection when we each confront the negative consequences of our mistakes and misdeeds as we strive to make amends and turn a new page in our lives.

All:

Let us support, challenge, and help empower one another to foster such improvement.

Reader:

Rosh Hashanah is the Jewish New Year's Day but, in contrast with the new years of other peoples, it is greeted with solemnity as well as revelry. As we begin our ceremony, we light these festival (and Sabbath) candles to illuminate our self-examination and to express our hopes for the future.

Entering the Holiday

Lighting the Candles

הַדְּלָקַת נֵרוֹת

Hadlakat Neiros

Leader reads or sings using traditional melody:

N'varekh et ha-or ba-olam.

N'varekh et ha-or ba-adam.

N'varekh et ha-or ba-(Shabbat u-v')yom tov.

נְבָרֵךְ אֶת הָאוֹר בְּעוֹלָם.

נְבָרֵךְ אֶת הָאוֹר בְּאָדָם.

נְבָרֵךְ אֶת הָאוֹר בְּ(שַׁבָּת וּב')יּוֹם טוֹב.

All:

Let us bless the light in the world.

Let us bless the light in humanity.

Let us bless the light of (Shabbat and) this holiday.

(The candles are lit.)

Reader:

Just as candles radiate warmth and illumination, so too may we.

Just as our forebears kindled such flames for themselves and us,

so too may we shine our lights for the present generations

and those yet to come.

Song: Ayfo Oree / אֵיפֹה אוֹרֵי

Celebrating the New Year

Leader:

Since ancient times, Jews have gathered together on this day, lit ceremonial fires, sang and recited liturgy, celebrated the new year, and reflected on their lives.

Reader:

Today we remember all the times that we came together during the year with family and friends, to light candles and sing.
Together we remember times of joy and sorrow.
Together we contemplate how to live better lives.
Together we renew our covenant, our commitment to shared ideals.

All:

These memories of the past and ideals of a better future help shape and give meaning to our lives.
These memories and ideals link us with our forebears and heritage, and, we hope, with generations to come.

For All That Has Kept Us Alive לְכֹל שֶׁחַיֵּנוּ L'khol Shehecheyanu

Leader:

As we reflect on our good fortune to begin another year of life, let us say a *Shehecheyanu*, a celebration of the new, the rare, and the wonderful.

Leader reads or sings to traditional melody:

*N'varekh kol dor va-dor
shehecheyanu v'kiyy'manu,
v'higgi'anu la-z'man ha-zeh. Amen.*

נְבַרְךָ כָּל-דּוֹר וְדוֹר
שֶׁחַיֵּנוּ וְקִיּוּמָנוּ,
וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזִמְנֵי הַזֶּה. אָמֵן.

All read English translation of the Hebrew:

Let us bless the goodness which we have encountered in the world, which has kept us alive and sustained us, and brought us to this moment.

Reader:

Let us celebrate this Rosh Hashanah, this "head" of the new year, by being mindful of how we help create the world in which we live.
Let us begin this new year by cleansing our hands and our hearts, by correcting our mistakes and making amends with those we have hurt.

Leader:

Let us value this day of celebration and reflection by striving to put our hearts into all we do, today and every day.
Let us inaugurate this new year by being truly present and engaged, by reaching out to others, by lending a hand.

All:

Let us fill this new year with healing and growth, with joy and insight, with our efforts for the advancement of freedom, equity, and peace.

Affirming Human Diversity and Unity

A Humanistic Shema

”שְׁמַע” הוֹמָנוּטִי

“Shema” Humanisti

(Inspired by the “Sh’ma” – D’varim / Deuteronomy 6:4)

Leader:

All able, please stand and sing to the traditional melody:

*Shema Yisrael
im kol shonuteinu
kol ha-adam echad.
Kulanu na'avod
l'takkein et ha-olam ha-zeh.*

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל
עִם כָּל שׁוֹנוֹתֵינוּ
כָּל הָאָדָם אֶחָד.
כּוֹלֵנוּ נַעֲבֹד
לְתַקֵּן אֶת הָעוֹלָם הַזֶּה.

All:

Hear, O Israel, with all our diversity, all humanity is one.
Together let us all work to improve this world.

(Please be seated.)

Let Us Love

(English reading inspired by the "V'Ahavta" - Devarim / Deuteronomy 6:5-9)

Reader 1:

Let us encounter all the world with appreciative and insightful love,
deep and healing love, liberating and joyful love.
Let us rejoice in love and in the fertility it brings to the human experience.

All:

Love expands our abilities to explore and express ourselves.
Love deepens our feelings of connectedness and individuality.

Leader:

Love helps us reach across the boundaries
of ego, class, creed, ethnicity, and nation.
Love heightens our senses of meaning, beauty, and wonder.

All:

Let us love all the world
with all our heart, with all our soul, and with all our might.

Reader:

And these words will be upon our heart always.
Let us learn them by heart with our children, and let us speak them often -
as we sit in our homes and walk along the way, as we lie down and rise up.

All:

Let us attach them as a sign to guide our minds and our hands.
Let us write them on *mezuzot* in our home as lessons.
Let us make our every deed a labor of love.

Leader:

Let it be words of love that we speak and live by,
not words of gossip, ill-will, or cruelty –
not words of *lashon ha-ra*, the evil tongue.

Song: Hinei Mah Tov (“Behold, How Good!”) / הִנֵּה מַה-טוֹב

Amidah

“Standing” up for and Acting on What We Believe - עֲמִידָה

(Inspired by the Amidah blessings, Psalms 145:14 and 146:7-9, and Isaiah 6:3)

Leader:

Since the Temple stood in Jerusalem, Jews, in a "standing" position, *amidah*,
have idealized qualities which they attributed to their ancestors and deity.
All able, please stand together now to proclaim our shared ideals and our will to
act upon them.

All:

Let us remember those who have come before us,
who have given us life, love, and our culture.

Leader:

Such is our *zikkaron chasdei imot v-avot* / זִכְרוֹן חַסְדֵי אֲמוֹת וְאָבוֹת,
our remembrance of the kindness and merits of our mothers and fathers.

All:

Let us work together in mutual aid to benefit all.

Leader:

May we thus advance mutuality, *g'milut hasadim* / גְּמִילוּת חֶסֶדִים –
our best response to being parts of a vast and interdependent world.

All:

Let us be thankful for all that sustains us,
for all that gives us contentment and joy, compassion and understanding.

Leader:

May our efforts help bring such well-being to all who live on earth.

All:

Let us work for peace, *shalom*, שְׁלוֹם –
in our relationships, our communities, and our world.
Let us recognize and celebrate our differences
to better live together on this one planet.

Let us work: to heal the sick and sustain health,
to give to the weary strength and life renewed, to support those who have fallen,
to uplift those bowed down, to free those in bondage,
to abolish both greed and poverty, to repair and improve the world.

Leader:

Havah na'avod:

L'rappei cholim u-l'khalkeil b'riyut,

la-teit la-ayeif koach v'chayyim m'chudeshet,

lismokh noflim,

l'zakeif k'fufim, l'hatir asurim,

l'vatteil gam betza v'gam oni,

l'takein et ha-olam

הִבָּה נַעְבוֹד:

לְרַפֵּא חוֹלִים וּלְכַלֵּל בְּרִיאוֹת,

לְתֵת לְעֵיף כֹּחַ וְחַיִּים מְחֻדָּשִׁים,

לְסַמֵּךְ נוֹפְלִים,

לְזַקֵּף כְּפוּפִים, לְהַתִּיר אֲסוּרִים,

לְבַטֵּל גַּם בְּצַע וְגַם עֲנִי,

לְתַקֵּן אֶת הָעוֹלָם.

Amidah – Rosh Hashanah Additions

Let Us Acknowledge the Power וּנְתַנָּה תְּקֵרָה U-N'tanneh Tokef

("Let Us Acknowledge the Power" of this day to remind us that all human beings are the co-authors of the "Book of Life")

Leader:

Rosh Hashanah heightens our awareness that each human action or inaction may have significance in what Jewish lore and liturgy call the "Book of Life" - *Sefer ha-chayyim* - of which we are all together both authors and subjects. This mythic book is thus comprised of the totality of our human experience.
(Talmud, Tractate Rosh Hashanah 16b)

Reader:

This "Book of Life" is imagined to be our collective record of all our deeds - from best to worst and those in between. We celebrate all that are laudable, and we feel regret and anxiety over our mistakes and misdeeds: we fear that their consequences may haunt and shadow us, blocking our way to the better future we desire.

Leader (reads beginning of the U-N'tanneh Tokef in Hebrew and English):

U-n'tanneh tokef k'dushat ha-yom.

Ki hu nora v'ayom.

וּנְתַנָּה תְּקֵרָה קְדוּשַׁת הַיּוֹם
כִּי הוּא נוֹרָא וְאִיּוֹם.

"Let us acknowledge the distinct power of this day.
For it is one of awe and angst."

All:

Let us acknowledge the distinct power of this day to remind us that all human beings are together co-authors of the "Book of Life."

Reader:

Yet, while we all miss the mark, go astray, often harming others and ourselves, we all are also able to make substantive change to counter the negative outcomes of our own mistakes and misdeeds.

All:

Let us begin the new year by each listening to the "still small voice" of conscience within us.

(Hebrew phrase kol d'mamah dakkah in I Kings 19.12; English phrase "still small voice" in Cowper and Byron)

Leader:

U-v'shofar gadol yittaka.

V'kol d'mamah dakkah yishama.

וּבְשׁוֹפָר גָּדוֹל יִתְקַע.
וְקוֹל דְּמָמָה דַּקָּה יִשְׁמַע.

All:

"The great shofar will be sounded; the still small voice will be heard."

Having heard the call of conscience, let us engage in moral renewal.

Leader:

At Rosh Hashanah we are mindful of how we each may engage ourselves in turning new pages in a "Book of Life" compiling humanity's good works. Jewish tradition, as summed up by the stark poetry of the *U-N'tanneh Tokef*, prescribes three ways of countering the negative consequences of our deeds: *teshuvah*, *tefillah*, and *tzedakah*.

Reader:

Teshuvah here means answering for our wrongs, taking responsibility for them, and returning to the right path to reach our moral goals.

All:

Let us "turn from wrong and do good; seek peace and pursue it." (*Psalms 34:15*)

Let us take responsibility for our lives and make *teshuvah*.

Let us make paths that help us reach our moral goals.

Reader:

Tefillah is commonly translated as "prayer," yet is also related to words for hope, imagination, seeking, examination, thought, decision, and judgment.

Humanists may therefore interpret and value *tefillah* as self-examination, introspection, soul-searching, as well as moral reckoning and accountability – all of which in Hebrew can also be called *cheshbon ha-nefesh*.

All:

May our introspections help us renew our hopes

for the improvement of ourselves and our world.

May our words of reflection today be the seeds of our deeds in the year ahead.

Leader:

Tzedakah is generous and magnanimous moral action for justice. Often translated as "charity," *tzedakah* includes and transcends philanthropy. *Tzedakah* at its best creates empowerment, cooperation, and equality.

All:

May we give generously of ourselves and our wherewithal to help bring about the better world of which we dream. May we “do what is right and just.” (*Jeremiah 23.5*)

Reader:

“...let justice roll forth like waters,
and *tzedakah* – moral action – like a stream ever-flowing.” (*Amos 5.24*)

Leader (reads the original Hebrew of the Bible passage above):

*V'yiggal ka-mayim mishpat,
u-tz'dakah k'nachal eitan.*

וַיִּגַּל כַּמַּיִם מִשְׁפָּט,
וַיִּצְדָּקָה כְּנַחַל אֵיתָן.

May our ideals and hopes help guide and inspire our actions in the year ahead.

All:

Let us commit ourselves to such deeds in this world today and every day.
Let us all be thus dedicated and appreciated, devoted and acknowledged.

Leader:

*Nih'yeh kulanu –
kadosh u-k'doshah, k'doshim u-k'doshot.*

נְהִיָּה כְּלָנוּ –
קְדוֹשׁ וּקְדוּשָׁה, קְדוֹשִׁים וּקְדוּשׁוֹת.

All:

Let us encounter each person as a precious presence, a sublime jewel of life.
Let us thus see and feel, hear and smell,
taste and celebrate the beauty of this world:
All the Earth is full of merit and splendor, all beings full of worth and wonder.

Leader:

*M'lo khol ha-aretz kavod.
(Inspired by Isaiah 6:3)*

מְלֵא כָּל-הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹד.

Reader:

And thus, may we help all of humanity to become
one fellowship with a heart at peace.

Leader (Hebrew below is Humanistic reframing of traditional liturgical passage above):

*U-v'khen, na'azor kol enoshut l'havvot
aguddah echat b'leivav shalem.*

וּבְכֵן נַעְזוֹר כָּל-אֲנוּשׁוֹת לְהוֹיֹת
אֶגְדָּה אַחַת בְּלִבָּב שְׁלָם.

Reader:

"And thus, let us encourage hope,
and let us work for the end of tyranny
and for the growth of liberty and justice."

Leader (reads the Hebrew of the Humanistic adaptation of the liturgical passage above):

U-v'khein n'ameitz tikvah

v'na'avod la-sof shel memshelet zaton

u-l'giddul cheirut u-tz'dakah.

וּבְכֵן נְאֻמָּץ תִּקְוָה
וְנַעֲבֹד לְסוֹף שֶׁל מְמַשְׁלֵת זָטוֹן
וּלְגִדּוּל חֵירוּת וְצַדִּיקָה.

All:

And thus, let us renew our vision, our commitments and our efforts
for the improvement of the world, for *tikkun ha-olam*.

Let us recognize our short-comings and our potentials
find contentment and joy in life as we work to live up to our ideals.

Reader:

As we begin this new year, let us appreciate all the goodness that we experience
and create in this world, and let us work together to save this world for future
generations.

“The Head of the Year”

(By Marge Piercy, from The Art of Blessing the Day)

Leader:

The Moon is dark tonight, a new
moon for a new year. It is
hollow and hungers to be full.
It is the black zero of beginning.

Leader:

Your face is dark
too as you turn inward to face
yourself, the hidden twin
of all you must grow to be.

Reader:

Now you must void yourself
of injuries, insults, incursions.
Go with empty hands to those
you have hurt and make amends.

Reader:

Forgive the dead year. Forgive
yourself. What will be wants
to push through your fingers.
The light you seek hides
in your belly.

All:

It is not too late. It is early
and about to grow. Now
is the time to do what you
know you must and have feared
to begin.

All:

The light you
crave longs to stream from
your eyes. You are the moon
that will wax in new goodness.

Song: "Seasons"

The "Sovereignty" Verses

מַלְכוּיּוֹת

Malkhuyyot

Leader:

Humanity has long cherished enduring ideals of a just order transcending the misrule of tyrants and the sorrows that flow from our own misjudgment and misdirection.

Reader:

Rosh Hashanah is also called Yom ha-Din – יוֹם הַדִּין – "The Day of Judgment" (Talmud, Berakhot 12b). We gather to observe this day as one dedicated to human self-examination, self-judgment, and self-correction. We make this season one of moral renewal as we begin the new year together by each of us acting as the author of our own becoming, and inscribing our hopefully ever-improving selves into a metaphorical Book of Life.

Leader:

Aleinu – עֲלֵינוּ: It is upon us – it is our responsibility – together to cultivate and sustain progress in this world using our evolving capacities for human self-determination and harmony.

All:

We here are connected with the peoples of all other lands, all the families of the Earth. Our lot is the same as theirs, thus we must stand together for equality, liberty, and peace. The highest value is in the breath of life; nothing is more precious.

Reader:

"Man's plight would, indeed, be sad if he had to be kept in order through fear of punishment and hope of reward after death."
(*Albert Einstein*)

All:

"Man must break his fetters which have chained him to the gates of heaven and hell, so that he can begin to fashion out of his reawakened and illumined consciousness a new world upon earth."
(*Emma Goldman, The Philosophy of Atheism, 1916*)

Amidah – Shofar Service

Sounding the Shofar

תְּקִיעַת הַשּׁוֹפָר

T'kiat ha-Shofar

Leader:

Let us now listen to the voice of the shofar.

Havah nishma kol shofar: הִבֵּה נִשְׁמַע קוֹל שׁוֹפָר

Aleinu: עֲלֵינוּ

It is upon us - it is our responsibility – to strive to live up to these values.

In each of us may our conscience, enlightened judgment, and commitment be roused:

By the shofar's sustained "blast" of *tekiah* תְּקִיעָה

By the "broken" notes of *shevarim* שְׁבָרִים

By the staccato "alarm" of *teruah* תְּרוּעָה

And by yet another "blast" of *tekiah* תְּקִיעָה

The "Remembrance" Verses

זְכוֹרוֹת

Zikhronot

Reader:

Today is also called *Yom ha-Zikkaron* – יוֹם הַזְּכוֹרוֹן - "The Day of Remembrance" (Hebrew Bible, Leviticus 23:24). Since antiquity this day has been a time for Jews and any who sojourn among them to remember both what is and what ought to be, both the real and the ideal, both their own words and deeds - good and bad - and the moral covenant in which they cooperate for the improvement of the world, *tikkun ha-olam*. Such remembering drives our moral reckoning as we feel the vast gap between our vision of what we should do and what we have actually done.

All:

Today and everyday let us remember and act upon our human solidarity, compassion, and ideals that constitute our covenant for a better world.

Leader:

May the shofar awaken us to be ever mindful of our expansive covenant which reaches from our forebears to us and on to the many generations yet born.

Tekiah תְּקִיעָה
Teruah תְּרוּעָה
Tekiah תְּקִיעָה

The “Trumpet” Verses

שופרות

Shofarot

Reader:

Rosh Hashanah is also called *Yom T'ruah* – יוֹם תְּרוּעָה – “The Day of Sounding” the Shofar (Numbers 29:1). The primal blasts of the ram’s horn trumpet have for thousands of years proclaimed the cycles of the years and months, the inaugurations of war and peace, new rulers, decrees, and freedoms, as well as calls to conscience, hope, and action. Today the shofar can still help move us, if we but choose to be so moved.

Leader:

"In the seventh month, on the first day of the month, you will have a day of rest dedicated to the remembrance of your deeds with the sounding of the shofar, a special assembly." (*Leviticus 23.24*)

All:

"Sound on the new moon the shofar, on the full moon of our festival day." (*Psalms 81:4*)

Reader:

Like the thunder on the mountain, let the shofar sound.
Like strings and drums, reeds and cymbals, let us hear the music of its call.
(Exodus 19:16; Psalm 150)

Leader:

Tekiah תְּקִיעָה
Shevarim שְׁבָרִים
Tekiah תְּקִיעָה

Song: Tz'rikhim Anachnu Tzedakah V'Chesed

“Beginners”

(by Denise Levertov)

Reader:

We have only begun
To imagine the fullness of life.
How could we tire of hope? –
So much is in bud.

Leader:

How can desire fail? –
We have only begun
To imagine justice and mercy,

All:

Only begun to envision
How it might be
To live as siblings
with beast and flower,
Not as oppressors.

Reader:

Surely our river
Cannot already be hastening
Into the sea of non-being?

Leader:

Not yet, not yet –
There is too much broken
That must be mended,

All:

Too much hurt that we have done to
each other
That cannot yet be forgiven.
We have only begun to know
The power that is in us
if we would join
Our solitudes in the communion
of struggle.

Reader:

So much is unfolding that must
Complete its gesture.
So much is in bud.

Thoughts on a New Year and New Life

Leader:

“That life is both fleeting and uncertain is a truth that presses upon the mind with special force as the old year ends and the new begins. Time speeds on and we go with it, and though we have seen the year close, we can never be sure of seeing the end of the new. Since life is so fleeting and frail, we must begin the serious use of it at once, and begin it by entering upon the task of self-examination and self-ennoblement which is its essential preliminary. A new year, say the rabbis, should inaugurate new life.” (*Rabbi Morris Joseph*)

Song: “When I’m Gone”

Leader:

Let us consider the limited time we have on earth and use it wisely.
Let us create value in each of our days.

All:

May we use with diligence and foresight our span of time.

Reader:

May we cherish and steward the best legacies of generations past,
and, through our own deeds, contribute to generations present and future.

All:

Generation upon generation – *dor va-dor* – may we cultivate the virtues that shine forth the highest qualities of our shared humanity and elevate the human experience.

Reader:

“There are those who now look back in complacency and indifference, who accept the fruits of the long journey but ignore the bitter costs of liberation and its lessons in tenacity and endurance. They are the strangers and the road passes them by. There are others who look back in gratitude and humility, who remember that few present blessings have been won without the sacrifices of the past, who continually re-evaluate the spiritual and cultural treasures that the travail of the journey has produced. These are the true heirs of the generations, and for them the long and agonizing journey has been worthwhile.” (*Howard Sachar*)

Mourner’s Kaddish

קְדִישׁ יְתוֹם

Kaddish Yatom

Leader:

As we now remember our loved ones – and so many others – who have died, let us recite together responsively an affirmation of our "dedication," our *kaddish*, to life and its improvement.

(Please rise, if you are able)

All:

Let us recall each person of blessed memory in all their humanity, with all their strengths and limitations.

Let us honor and learn much from the best in the legacies of our loved ones past for the sake of all those who now live and for the sake of all those who will yet come to live in this world.

Thus, let us stretch ourselves to reach for greatness and let us dedicate ourselves in the name of the living multitudes of this world.

Leader (reads Hebrew equivalent of the English sentence above):

Nitgaddeil v'nitkaddeish

b'sheim ribbuyei ha-chayyim ba-olam hazeh.

נִתְגַדֵּיל וְנִתְקַדֵּישׁ

בְּשֵׁם רַבּוּיֵי הַחַיִּים בְּעוֹלָם הַזֶּה.

All:

May it be our heart's desire
to work for healing and equity,
for freedom and peace –
to cultivate these in our lives, and in our days,
and in the lives of everyone in the world,
swiftly and soon.

Leader (reads Hebrew equivalent of the English passage above):

T'hei masat libbeinu

lif'ol l'ma'an refuah v'tzedek,

cheirut v'shalom -

l'gaddeil otam b'chayyeinu, u-vimeinu,

u-v'chayyei kulam ba-olam,

ba'agala u-vizman kariv.

V'havah nomar: "Amein."

תְּהֵא מְשָׂאת לְבִינוּ
לְפָעוּל לְמַעַן רְפוּאָה וְצֶדֶק,
חַרוּת וְשָׁלוֹם –
לְגַדֵּל אוֹתָם בְּחַיֵּינוּ, וּבְיָמֵינוּ,
וּבְחַיֵּי כָּלֵם בְּעוֹלָם,
בְּעֶגְלָא וּבְזִמָּן קָרִיב.
וְהָבֵה נְאֻמָּר, "אָמֵן".

All:

And let us say: "Amen" / "אָמֵן"

Let us bless and praise the memories of our loved ones with our actions.

Leader (reads Hebrew equivalent of the last English line above):

N'vareikh u-n'shabbe'ach otam.

נְבָרְךָ וְנִשְׁבַּח אוֹתָם.

All:

Let us remember them in their glory and at their heights.

Leader (reads Hebrew equivalent of the English sentence above):

Nizkor otam

b'tiferet u-v'romemut shellahem.

נִזְכוֹר אוֹתָם
בְּתִפְרֹת וּבְרוֹמֵמוֹת שְׁלֵהֶם.

All:

May we carry on the best elements of their lives with splendor.

Leader (reads Hebrew paraphrase of the English sentence above):

Nissa b'hadar.

נִשָּׂא בְהַדָּר.

All:

May we ascend in the shining examples of their praiseworthy deeds.

Leader (reads Hebrew paraphrase of the English sentence above):

Na'aleh b'divreihem l'halleil

נַעֲלֶה בְּדִבְרֵיהֶם לְהַלִּיל.

All:

Even as we speak, we know that the value of each life exceeds all that can be expressed in blessings or in songs, in praises or in words of consolation.

Leader (reads Hebrew paraphrase of the English sentence above):

*Kodeish ha-nefesh oleh min kol
b'rakhot o shirim, sh'vachim o nechamot.*

קודש הנפש עולה מן כל
ברכות או שירים, שבחים או נחמות.

Song: Na'aseh Shalom

All:

Let us make peace in the world. Peace is our responsibility, the responsibility of all the Jewish people, all of *Yisrael*, and the responsibility of all peoples in the world. Let there be peace for us all.

Leader:

Let us reach out to one another to help bring peace to those in grief and strife. Let us care for each other wherever someone suffers loss.

Reader:

We all need community as we encounter life's peaks and chasms. Let us make our congregation a sanctuary of humanity, a place to feel our pain and our joy together, a space to plumb the depths of our souls and heal our wounds together, a spiritual home where we share our poetry and songs, our visions and labors of love.

Leader:

For those who mourn, let us offer you an oasis of peace in this caring community. For the ones we mourn, let us find lessons and inspiration in their legacies. Let us remember righteous actions for blessing.

Nizkor tzedakah liv'rakhah.

נזכור צדקה לברכה.

All:

Amen / אָמֵן.

(Please be seated.)

A Blessing for Children
(Inspired by Numbers 6:24-26)

(Parents and others together offer this blessing to children who are present. Parents customarily place their hands on their children's heads during this blessing.)

Leader:

Just as we remember our loved ones past and celebrate the best in the lives they led, so too do we have hope for our children and all who will yet be born into this world.

All:

We bless you and watch over you with our love,
and we hope that your learning and good deeds bring you joy and long life.
May you help others and be an example to all,
just as others help you and show you the paths of goodness.
May the best within you shine forth with compassion,
and may you always lift up your face to meet others in peace.

Reader:

As we hope for peace in the world, we must commit ourselves to working for peace. While force may sometimes be necessary to defend ourselves, we also know that violence and war are not able to solve humanity's problems, as they themselves are parts of our moral failings. Let us renew in our deeds the words of the ancient Hebrew prophets Isaiah and Micah, who taught that: "Nation shall not raise up sword against nation, neither shall they any more learn war."

Leader:

A song of peace written after the Six Day War of 1967 imagined a better year ahead in which the sounds of birds singing and children playing replace the din of war. Please now join in singing that song of peace "Ba-Shanah Ha-Ba'ah."

Song: Ba-Shanah Ha-Ba'ah

Kiddush

"Dedication" to Being an Open and Caring Community

Leader:

To conclude our ceremony we will now drink a toast to the new year, break bread together, and share apples and honey –

all of which express our hopes for sharing a sweet and bountiful new year.
First comes our toast – our *kiddush* – dedicated to the new year.

(Leader raises the wine to toast and begins:)

Wine: symbol of pleasure and sorrow,
symbol of passion and the blood of life, symbol of plenty and of excess.

All:

Let us bless our lives and the new year by fostering community
by sharing our joy, our spirit, and our bounty, by inviting visitors to join us,
by welcoming the stranger, by caring for those in need.

Let us celebrate wine as a symbol of all that is good in the world.

Let us drink a toast with the fruit of the vine: "To Life!"

Leader (sings traditional melody):

N'vareikh et borei p'ri ha-gafen.

נְבָרַךְ אֶת בּוֹרְאֵי פְרִי הַגָּפֶן.

Let us bless those who create the fruit of the vine.

(Wine is sipped.)

Let Us Bring Forth Food

נוֹצִיא לֶחֶם

Notzi Lechem

(Inspired by the traditional "Ha-Motzi" blessing, meaning "the one who brings forth")

All:

Each time we break bread,
let us commit ourselves to a covenant for a better world.

Leader (sings traditional melody):

*N'vareikh et ha-motzi'im lechem min ha-
aretz.*

נְבָרַךְ אֶת הַמוֹצִיאִים לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ.

Let us bless those who bring forth bread from the earth.

(A symbolic pinch of challah is eaten.)

A Blessing over Apples and Honey

Leader:

The apple's beauty, fragrance, and taste inspired ancient Jews to see it as a symbol of sensuality and the lust for life. The apple was also included in many Jewish legends as a symbol of good fortune and hope. The "honey" referred to in the Bible was a syrup made from fruit, and was the epitome of sweetness and desirability to the ancient Jews.

May our sweet apples and honey remind us to appreciate and find contentment in life's healthier pleasures.

All:

May the wholesomeness of this simple fare
nourish our hope and our will to work
for the improvement of our lives and our world.

Leader:

לְבָרִיאוֹת! בִּתְאֻבּוֹן! / *Livri'ut! B'te'avon!*
("To your health! Bon appetit!")

(Apple is dipped in honey and eaten.)

Closing the Service

Sounding the Shofar

תְּקִיעַת הַשּׁוֹפָר

T'kiat ha-Shofar

Leader:

Let us now listen to the voice of the shofar.

Havah nishma kol shofar. הִבָּה נִשְׁמַע קוֹל שׁוֹפָר

Like a banner lifted high, it hearkens all the world to action
for peace and freedom and compassion (Isaiah 15:3).

All:

Blow the shofar! Proclaim our search for understanding and healing!

Leader:

תְּקִיעָה *Tekiah*

All:

Blow the shofar! Proclaim our struggle for equity and freedom!

Leader:

שְׁבָרִים *Shevarim*

All:

Blow the shofar! Proclaim our commitment to peace and the planet!

Leader:

תְּרוּעָה *Teruah*

All:

May the shofar – which assembled ancient Israel
in expectation of its challenges, fears and dreams –
awaken each of us and draw us together
to face our own in the coming year.
May we hear the shofar as our call to action!

Leader:

Tekiah Gedolah! תְּקִיעָה גְּדוֹלָה!

Farewell!

Leader:

We have come together here today, as the Jewish new year begins, to reconnect with each other and the extended family that is the Jewish people. We have celebrated progressive values and teachings which help us guide our lives and which we treasure as our heritage.

All:

We reflect on the imperative to improve ourselves and our community, our culture and our world. We are the stewards of a great legacy, and the trailblazers of a vital evolving civilization.
We reflect on all that for which we feel grateful in life, and look forward to the new year.

Leader:

May we respond with courage, determination, and urgency to life's challenges and its promise. May our deeds help make the new year good and sweet.

Closing Song: L'Shanah Tovah U-M'tukah!

"To a Good and Sweet Year!" / לְשָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמְתוּקָה!

**Happy New Year!
Shanah Tovah! Gut Yor! Buen Anyu!**

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Any featured speaker/s during the ceremony can best be included: 1) before or after the song at
the top of page 11, and/or 2) after the shofar is blown on page 13.

With other liturgies for Secular Humanistic Jews, this is available through the “Holidays” link on
our website: www.machar.org

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