

Dear Friends,

Among the strengths our people have shown over the centuries is the capacity to adapt to trying circumstances. The reality of the COVID-19 health crisis, making it unsafe to gather in our sanctuary for Rosh Ha'Shana and Yom Kippur, is difficult to accept. Yet, in keeping with our history, we are making the necessary adjustments to hold this year's High Holy Days services online.

Rest assured that there will be a healthy measure of continuity amidst all the change. *Mishkan Ha'Nefesh* will remain our High Holy Days prayer book (you may choose whether to use hardcover or complimentary "flip" books provided online by our Reform movement). During services, our musician-in-residence, Dr. Lorne Dectenberg, will lead us in song. At times he will play live. On some occasions you will see and hear Shir Adat performances from years past. At other moments you will encounter new material that ensemble members will have recorded individually and that Lorne will have edited into a choral piece. The shofar will be sounded. Torah and Haftorah will be chanted. Sermons will be given. Readings led by congregants will remain an integral part of the service.

To get ourselves ready for the High Holy Days, we will be transitioning to Zoom — with livestreams of the Zoom service on Facebook Live and YouTube — by Aug. 7. Until further notice, our last livestream service via StreamSpot will be tonight, Friday, July 31. The Zoom invitation for future Sabbath services will be sent the week of Aug. 3. (If you or a family member or friend needs help connecting via Zoom, Facebook Live or YouTube, please let us know in advance, and we will find a volunteer to assist you.) **Please make an extra effort to take part Aug. 7 and 14 as we will be soliciting feedback about Torah readings. The Aug. 7 service will be a demonstration of how it will look and feel when it is prerecorded. The service Aug. 14 will give us a chance to assess how it comes across when we invite people to read/chant live from home.**

Even though we cannot gather in our sanctuary, we can transform our homes into a combined sacred space in which to share the High Holy Days. To help achieve this goal we will be offering High Holy Days kits that will include ritual and practical items to make your dinner table or whatever space you choose a mikdash me'at, a "small sanctuary" or "temple in miniature." The kits will be available for pickup at TAI or, for those who need it, delivery.

Please look for more information including **youth and children's services**, worship times and additional offerings in follow-up emails and in the September bulletin. The year ahead promises to be challenging, but by working together we will have High Holy Days and other worship experiences that we can recall with a sense of pride and accomplishment. Even with all the anxiety and loss surrounding COVID-19, there is so much for which to be grateful. May this year's services be an opportunity to express that gratitude, and to renew the hope and joy that sustains us as a sacred community.

L'Heetraot- Looking Forward to Seeing You Soon,
Rabbi David Wirtschafter and Temple President Pat Shraberg