

The Bulletin

Magain



David



Magain David Sephardim Congregation

San Francisco

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High Holiday Greetings from the Board of Directors

Dear Congregants,

We once again welcome you to Magain David for the High Holidays. Attendance is open to the entire community and we look forward to seeing many familiar faces.

Services will be led by Rabbi Simon Benzaquen and Hazzan Uzi Shazzo. The two will bring us warm and spiritually uplifting services, with melodies and tunes from the Sephardic tradition. Please see the following pages for thoughts from the Rabbi and for the schedule of services.

Even though we feel more in control two and a half years after the start of the COVID-19 pandemic we must still be careful and we please ask you to take all the precautions that you can.

We recommend that you get fully vaccinated and that you avoid coming to the High Holidays services if you are not fully vaccinated, for your own sake and health and the health of others. Also, please stay home if you are feeling sick or have any symptoms that you think could be COVID related.

Because there are typically more people during the high holidays, we recommend wearing a mask inside the synagogue or the social hall downstairs to lower the risks of spreading COVID.

Also, please **bring something warm in case the weather is cold** as we will keep the windows open at **all times** during the service so the synagogue is well ventilated.

We want to be as open as possible so people can attend services, however, we might have to turn people away if there are too many people inside the synagogue, especially on Yom Kippur when there are usually a lot more people showing up.

Thank you all for understanding these restrictions and for helping us keep the services as safe as possible for all.

Seat Reservations: Many of you have already become members of the synagogue for 5783 (2022-2023). Thank you for your support. Seats will be reserved for our paid members of the synagogue but everyone is of course welcome to attend as is the tradition at Magain David. We also offer seat reservations for non-members: \$100 for Rosh Hashana only and \$100 for Yom Kippur only, or \$150 for both Rosh

Hashana and Yom Kippur. Reserve at: <http://www.magaindavid.com/seat-reservations>

Membership: If you are not already a member, please reflect on what the synagogue brings into your life. Your participation and membership contributions help us to continue to perpetuate our traditions and culture in San Francisco. To join Magain David as a member, please email the board of directors at info@magaindavid.com, or visit us at magaindavid.com/membership.

Sedarim: As in past years, we will have a Seder each night of Rosh Hashanah. Please join the Rabbi and Hazzan and other members of the congregation to celebrate with us. **We recommend that you BE FULLY VACCINATED to limit your risks as people inside will not be wearing masks.** To register for the Seder, please visit magaindavid.com/rosh-hashanah-seder.html, or text or call us: 415-752-9095. Cost per evening: \$100/adult, \$50/children under 13. **You must reserve in advance - no admission at the last minute.**

Staying Updated: You can stay updated on events and news at Magain David with our synagogue e-mail newsletter. Email us, or visit magaindavid.com/mailling-list. We also can send you text updates to your phone. Please email us your cell phone number, or text us your name to 415-752-9095.

We wish everyone in our community a meaningful Shana Tova and a happy and healthy 5783.

Alain Azan, President

Richie Greenberg, Vice President

Angela Beniflah, Board Member

Dan Serfaty, Treasurer

Rosh Hashana Message by Rabbi Simon Benzaquen

It is difficult to imagine that we are back thinking about the Yamim Noraim: the days of awe. It seems as though it was last week that we were at Magain David for Rosh Ha'Shana and Yom Kippur.



Truly, the passage of time as we grow older seems to be speeding. In fact, life is fleeting, and we have to make the most of the time that is granted to us by the Almighty. We must realize that life is precious and we cannot afford to waste a minute. We have to do those things that life is worth living for. To set us in this mood, that is why we have been given this season of the High Holidays. Rosh Hashana. Ten days of Penitence. Yom Kippur. Succoth. Simhat Tora. An entire month, preceded by the month of Elul, dedicated to reflection to action and commitment.

Every aspect of our lives has an ingredient of that, which needs retrospection, and evaluation, leading us to action and commitment, whether it is in sad, reflective moments, or afflicted or happy and joyous moments. All of them require introspection to make the most of it in a positive way, learning to value every moment of our lives and to appreciate the difference of what is good and real in our lives, and what is false and fleeting and wasteful.

This year, before Rosh Hashanah, many of us find ourselves very busy thinking about what is happening to our world, to our city San Francisco and to our United States. To our Israel, and to our Community at-large, even to our families and to ourselves.

Since the beginning of 2020, we have imposed on ourselves unprecedented limitations, not being able to venture in to the places that we were supposed to go and to be, nor go wherever we want to go. Our Synagogues have been Limited to us, by the number of people that can enter their portals. Our Magain David Synagogue that we cherish so much, and look forward to spend Shabbat services in harmony and friendship, and enjoy the most delicious Kiddush and meals catered by our very own Dina and Yossi Man. We have been deprived of the pleasures of visiting our families and our friends, in many cases the idea of traveling has to be postponed.

We had to go through these motions without knowing yet when we are going to go back and return to normal. As we went on our regular pursuit of our lives and ventures, we never had ideas of what next year, next month, next week, or even next day, was going to be like, but we, all of us have been caught off guard, we have been surprised by the Covid-19 epidemic and pandemic that has engulfed the entire world with devastating results. It has put the entire world upside down. This is exactly the true adage that says "Man proposes but God disposes". Therefore, it is wise to consider every moment that God grants us and to make the most of it especially with our families and our friends.

Thank G-d, that now we are able to come and pray without any of the restrictions that we were bound before because of Covid19. But still we face anxieties and worry. There is a lot bad and confusing in our world. With what is happening in Ukraine with Russia and Russia Joining forces with Iran, Syria and China. We are living in troubled times. The climate is one of fear about an uncertain future, by the personal and emotional anxieties that many of us grapple with daily. The psychological forces, and the

health issues that many of us faced especially with Covid-19 still to be conquered, can be draining; we realize we had a lot to deal with.

And these days with the rampant anti-Semitism that is raising its ugly head again, and the state of our world in reference to us and to Israel, we cannot fathom how G-d runs this universe of ours, since He does this in combination with our actions and our free will.

Yet nothing is clear, for we are faced with things that happen in front of us that confound us and cloud our perspective of what is right and what is wrong. Many of us looked forward to the future, with our own plans of what we think ought to happen, suddenly we found that all of our plans are disrupted. Then we began to wonder why? When it was planned it looked perfect, it was well thought out. Yet as the saying goes “El hombre propone y D-io dispone”: “Man proposes, G -d disposes.” In reality, we might be thinking hard and calculating, planning, evaluating about how it ought to be - only to find out that in the bigger scheme of things, our thoughts, our plans and our evaluations amount to nothing.

This is the lesson that all of us should learn from the last two and a half years. That we might be planning as we should, but never forget that we are only planning, but the ultimate decider is G-d, not us.

This is why I believe Rosh Hashanah and Kippur and this entire season is necessary to awaken in us our inner faith, hope and belief in a better future, not to succumb to the quagmire of despair. To activate our inner energy within our souls, to pray to the One who is All- Powerful and can realize our good intentions, desires and answer our prayers. We may not have an exact strategy, but if we assume a resigned attitude, we will lose even before we begin. Our Jewish tradition is that every challenge, every adversity must begin with absolute fortitude and belief that victory is at hand. This is the root of faith. Faith that we will prevail with G-ds help. The breaths of fresh air of the newness of Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur and Sukkot, and the resolve of our faiths will have the power to counter the winds of our uncertainty. Rosh Hashanah is urging us, open the window of your heart and breath the fresh air of faith, as you are.

We must make our utmost endeavor to celebrate them, and not to discard the impact of celebrating them as a family. Those who are able to come to the Synagogue should do their level best to attend the Synagogue in person. And try to smell the flowers of gratitude to Ha'Shem for what you have and feel the hopeful breeze of your life.

At the beginning of the year, G-d decides and plans the entire year. This year I am praying to Hashem to grant us miracles to see with our own eyes the healing of our sick congregants, to answer our prayers with a yes, for Refuah-Shelema, to grant us and our families a good healthy and peaceful year with good Parnassa (livelihood) to be able to do Tzedaka and kindness for others. To receive good news from our children and grandchildren, to be granted harmony in our Congregation Magain David as well as other Congregations. And to crown the efforts of our members for the enhancement and strength of our congregation. May this year bring us closer to our complete redemption and may we be blessed with a good, sweet and a healthy Year. “Tizku Leshanim Rabbot Neimot Vetovot. Amen”.

Rabbi Simon Benzaquen

Important Notes and Links

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur Seat Reservations

Seats will be reserved for our paid members of the synagogue but everyone is of course welcome to attend as is the tradition at Magain David. We also offer seat reservations for non-members: \$100 for Rosh Hashana only and \$100 for Yom Kippur only, or \$150 for both Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur. To reserve your seat please visit the link:

<http://www.magaindavid.com/seat-reservations> or let us know in person or by email at info@magaindavid.com.

Rosh Hashanah Sedarim

Sunday, September 25 and Monday, September 26

There will be a Seder open to the community on each night of Rosh Hashanah at Magain David following services. **We recommend that you BE FULLY VACCINATED to limit your risks as people inside will not be wearing masks.**

The cost per evening is \$100/adult and \$50/child under 13.

You must reserve in advance - no admission at the last minute.

To register or download our [guide](#), visit magaindavid.com/rosh-hashanah-seder.html or contact the synagogue at 415-752-9095 or info@magaindavid.com.

Lulav and Etrog Sets

This year unfortunately we had to order before we sent the bulletin, so we will not be able to take orders at this point. However, we have a few extra sets coming, let us know if you need one and if there are some left, you can buy one of those. The cost is \$50 per set. Let us know as soon as possible either by phone at: 415-752-9095 or by email at: info@magaindavid.com.

Sukkot And Sukkah Construction

We are not announcing yet the schedule for Sukkot as it is subject to change. We will send an update before Yom Kippur to let you know.

We will however be putting up the Sukkah at the conclusion of Yom Kippur. If you are interested in participating in mitzvah of building the sukkah, please contact us at info@magaindavid.com or 415-752-9095.

5782-5783 High Holiday Services Schedule

Daily Selichot for the month of Elul: 6:00am at Anshey Sfarad @ 16th Avenue & Clement St

Erev Rosh Hashanah - Sunday, September 25th

Selichot-Hatarat Nedarim: 5:30 AM at Magain David

Candle Lighting: 6:43 PM

Mincha and Arvit: 6:30PM

Service followed by seder and dinner (reservations required)

Rosh Hashanah Day 1 – Monday, September 26th

Shacharit: 8:30 AM Torah Reading: 10:45 AM (approximate)

Sermon / Shofar Blowing: 11:30 AM (approximate)

Mussaf: 12:00 PM

Services followed by Kiddush and Lunch at the synagogue

Mincha: 4:30 PM

Tashlich (at Mountain Lake Park & 12th Avenue): 5:45 PM

Arvit: 7:00 PM

Services followed by seder and dinner (reservations required)

Rosh Hashanah Day 2 -Tuesday, September 27th

Shacharit: 8:30 AM Torah Reading: 10:45 AM (approximate)

Sermon / Shofar Blowing: 11:30 AM (approximate)

Mussaf: 12:00 PM

Services followed by Kiddush and Lunch at the synagogue

Mincha: 5:30 PM

Class taught by Rabbi Benzaquen 6:15 PM

Arvit 7:15 PM

Yom Tov ends: 7:30pm

Tzom Gedaliah – Wednesday September 28th

Fast begins: 5:40 AM Fast concludes: 7:27 PM

Erev Shabbat Shuva – Friday, September 30th

Candlelighting: 6:36pm Mincha/Kabbalat Shabbat: 6:30pm

Followed by a meal at the synagogue

Shabbat Shuva – Saturday, October 1st

Shacharit: 9:00 AM **Parashat “Vayelech”**

Services followed by Kiddush and Lunch at the synagogue

Mincha: 5:30PM Seuda: 6:00pm

Arvit and Havdalah 7:15PM Shabbat concludes: 7:34pm

Erev Yom Kippur –Tuesday, October 4th

Selichot - Hatarat Nedarim: 5:30 AM at Magain David

Candle Lighting / Fast begins: 6:30 PM

Tallit put on no later than: 6:45 PM

Lecha Eli / Kol Nidrei: 6:45 PM

Yom Kippur – Wednesday, October 5th

Shacharit: 8:00 AM

Torah Reading: 10:30 AM Rabbi's Sermon: 11:15 AM

Mussaf: 11:45 AM – 2:30 PM Mincha: 3:30 PM followed by words from Rabbi Benzaquen.

Neilah: 6:15PM. Shofar / Fast ends: 7:25 PM followed by Arvit.

Followed by small snacks to break the fast – Please do not congregate upstairs or downstairs because of COVID concerns.

Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, Simchat Torah (times may change; check website)

The schedule is not finalized at this time. However, these are the zmanims for the Sukkot holidays. Please watch our newsletter before Yom Kippur for the final schedule.

Erev Sukkot, Sunday October 9th Candles 6:22pm Mincha 6:25pm

Sukkot Day 1 and Day 2 (Monday and Tuesday, Oct 10th and 11th) 9:15am

End of Yom Tov Tue night 7:23pm

Kabbalat Shabbat, October 14th, Candle lighting 6:15pm

Shabbat Hol Moed, October 15th, Shacharit 9:15am / 7:13pm

Tikkun Leil Hoshana Rabba, Saturday night, October 15, 11pm

Erev Shemini Atzeret, Sunday October 16th: Candle lighting 6:12pm

Shemini Atzeret / Simhat Torah (Mon October 17th & Tue 18th) 9:15am / 7:00pm

High Holiday Highlights by Rabbi Simon Benzaquen

Rabbi Benzaquen has shared these thoughts with us on the holidays. Please visit magaindavid.com/posts for more insights.

We are now in the month of Elul, the last month of the Jewish calendar. It begins a period of intensive introspection, to clarify life's goals, and to come closer to G-d. It is a time when we step back and look at ourselves critically and honestly, with the intention of improving.

The four Hebrew letters of the word Elul (aleph-lamed-vav-lamed) are the first letters of the four words Ani l'edodi v'edodi li — "I am to my Beloved and my Beloved is to me" (Song of Songs 6:3). These words sum up the relationship between G-d and His people. In other words, the month preceding Rosh Hashanah is a time when G-d reaches out to us in an effort to create a more spiritually-inspiring atmosphere, one that stimulates Teshuva (repentance). It is a time for us to take advantage, and get closer to G-d, since He, as it were, has put Himself in a situation of closeness with us and desires our presence in any way that we acknowledge Him, and especially when it brings credit to Him.

40-DAY PERIOD Over 3000 years ago, when the Jewish people were privileged to hear G-d utter the Ten Commandments set in tablets of stone, the Jews later sinned with the Golden Calf. Moshe desperately pleaded with G-d to spare the nation. He did, and that same day that G-d spared the Nation, it became a "Day of Forgiveness" - "Yom Kippur".

On the first day of Elul, Moshe ascended Mt. Sinai, and 40 days later — on the seminal Yom Kippur — he returned to the people (Jews) with a new, second set of stone tablets in hand.

For us as well the month of Elul begins a 40-day period that culminates in the holiest day of the year, Yom Kippur. During this period, many people increase their study of Torah and performance of good deeds.

Selihot We Sefaradim begin reciting Selihot from the first day of the month of Elul onward until Yom Kippur. Selihot is a special series of beautiful prayers that invoke G-d's mercy. In most Congregations, including Magain David, Selihot are recited early in the morning, before Shaharit.

After the sin of the Golden Calf Moses asked G-d to explain His system for relating to the world. G-d's answer, known as the "13 Attributes of Mercy," forms the essence of the Selihot prayers.

The "13 Attributes" speak of G-d's patience. The same G-d who created us with a clean slate and a world of opportunity, gives us another chance if we've misused the first one.

Selihot should be said with a minyan. If this is impossible, then it should still be said alone, omitting the parts in Aramaic and the "13 Attributes of Mercy".

Selihot are held every Sunday and weekday morning before Shacharit.

Two Aspects to Rosh Hashana When Rosh Hashana arrives we are keenly aware of its significance. On one hand it is the awesome Day of Judgment when G-d determines the outcome of our entire year. We become anxious and frightened not knowing what awaits us. On the other hand, on Rosh Hashana night

we also dip our apples into honey or sugar and partake of those symbols which signify what we hope for in the coming year; in which a happy and joyous mood prevails.

Sefaradim emphasize this happy and joyous mood of the Holiday especially in our Liturgy.

Notably, we do not recite “Unetane Tokef “ (“Let us express the mighty holiness of this day”) one of the most solemn and powerful prayers of Rosh Hashana, recited by our brethren Ashkenazim as introduction of The Kedusha during The Amida of Mussaf. Attributed to Rabbi Amnon of Mainz (10th century), “Untaneh Tokef” is a heart wrenching prayer, filled with emotional and powerful words which would lead us to cry and emphasize the sad aspect and judgment of the Rosh Hashana Yom Tov. In contrast, our sister Congregations, The Ashkenazim, make this Prayer the central theme of the Rosh Hashana Amidah.

Reviewing the laws of Rosh Hashana further reminds us that within judgment itself there is cause for rejoicing. We enter the day clean and dressed in our best garments as a sign of our confidence in a favorable judgment. On Rosh Hashana we do not recite the vidui (confession). Rather than focusing on past sins and seeking forgiveness, we look forward with optimism to the future.

When we properly understand the future of the judgment on Rosh Hashana, however, the apparent paradox of rejoicing in judgment evaporates. We recognize that it is we who require the Divine Judgment, the annual opportunity for spiritual stocktaking. We summon G-d to judge us with the blasts of the Shofar that herald the convening of the Divine Tribunal. Our voluntary submission to judgment arouses Divine Mercy; that is the secret of the Shofar. The shofar also reminds us of the merits of our patriarchs, Abraham and Isaac, who were willing to sacrifice their lives for the love of G-d, and in their place a ram was brought.

On the two nights of Rosh Hashana we should make sure that we partake of the symbols that we hope for in the coming year. Also, during the two days of Rosh Hashana, Monday, September 26th, and Tuesday, September 27th, we blow the shofar in our Synagogue. Everyone should come to the Synagogue both days of Rosh Hashana.

Hearing the Shofar is the most important obligation of the two days of Rosh Hashana.

TASHLICH We have a beautiful custom. On the first day of Rosh Hashana we recite the Tashlich Ceremony near a body of water. Tashlich are prayers recited while symbolically throwing away our sins.

Minha: 4:30 PM. Tashlich (Lake Park @ 12th Avenue): 5:45 PM. Arvit: 7:00 PM

ZIARA - CEMETERY PILGRIMAGE On the Eve of Rosh Hashana it is customary to make a pilgrimage to the cemetery (Ziara) to recite memorial prayers at the grave of the righteous, including members of our families who are buried there. The purpose for doing this is to pray to G-d to hear our prayers in the merit of the righteous.

Tizku Le'Shanim Rabbot.

Rabbi Simon Benzaquen