

Shalom Haverim,

We hope this message finds you as well as possible during this time.

As we look toward the 5781 High Holidays, we have considered and received many questions about BHBE's High Holiday services and observances. As a *kehillah kedoshah*—holy community—our utmost priority is health and safety. Our goal is to foster a meaningful and uplifting 5781 High Holiday prayer and community experience that ensures we uphold our tradition's primary concern, namely *pikuah nefesh*—the preservation of life.

Our 5781 ritual plans are robust and responsive to the environment. Many have been involved in working toward developing a plan for the High Holidays, including Rabbi Crane (who sits on the Committee on Jewish Law and Standards High Holiday Subcommittee), Cantor Roytman, our lay leadership, dedicated staff, and the COVID-19 Task Force.

Please find below responses to the most Frequently Asked Questions we receive.

B'Shalom,

Rabbi Nate Crane
Cantor Pavel Roytman
Keri Bahar, President
Jay Goldstein, EVP
Cynthia Lerner, Ritual VP

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur 5781 Frequently Asked Questions

[Technology and Logistics](#)

Will BHBE offer the streaming of High Holiday services? Absolutely! All of our High Holiday services will be streamed live without pre-recordings. We upgraded our technology from Zoom to create a better experience for our community.

Everyone will be able to access BHBE High Holiday services by computer, tablet, or other smart devices. Because of restrictions on the use of electronics on Shabbat and Yom Tov, everyone will only be in observation mode.

[In-Person Participation](#)

How many people will be able to attend BHBE services in-person?

For everyone's safety, in-person attendance will be limited to those directly participating in the prayer services. We want to ensure we have a minyan, but we will have no more than eighteen

people in the Sanctuary for each service. The 18 in attendance includes our clergy, and those who will read from the Torah.

Could there be multiple services each day of the High Holidays, i.e., early service and later service? Our prayer services will follow the same format as in previous years, with the exception of Tot and Family services, which will be held in the afternoons. Start times will be published in advance.

What will be the length of services? To minimize exposure for the clergy and members in attendance, we will abridge the High Holiday services within the appropriate halakhic framework, in accordance with the CJLS' High Holiday guidance. We will provide a comprehensive prayer guide for those who wish to follow the complete service, independently at home, or concurrently with streaming.

What prayer book will we use for the High Holidays? What if I do not have that prayer book at home? *Mahzor Lev Shalem*. If you have renewed your BHBE membership for the 2020-2021 year or joined as a new individual/family, you and your family members will be loaned a *Mahzor Lev Shalem* for this year, which can be picked up from BHBE on a specific date (along with other High Holiday items). Otherwise, you can purchase your copy of *Mahzor Lev Shalem*, [here](#). There will be a digital download available as well.

Will there be security at BHBE for services? Absolutely. There will be one security officer stationed at the parking lot door for those members attending in-person.

Will the prayer and public spaces be cleaned? Yes! All areas in use will be cleaned and thoroughly sanitized regularly and after each prayer service.

Could services be hosted outdoors? Unfortunately not. The weather could cancel our services, and extensive technology and cameras have been installed in the Sanctuary for streaming our services.

Will we come together for Tashlikh? We will offer multiple times in the afternoon of Rosh Hashanah Day II to join Rabbi Crane and Cantor Roytman for in-person tashlikh services at the Keay Nature Center (corner of Skokie and Hibbard). Also, throughout the intermediary days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, Rabbi Crane and Cantor Roytman will host in-person tashlikh services in Glenview, Evanston, and Skokie. To control for the number of people attending, we will be providing information for signing up for various times. Facial masks and social distancing will be required. Additionally, we will provide guidance for everyone to fulfill tashlikh at home.

Will there be an opportunity to visit the Sanctuary during the High Holidays? Yes. For the intermediary days between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur, families can sign up for a time to

visit the Sanctuary for a private prayer experience. We will provide prayers and readings, or each of us can share personal prayers from our hearts.

[Online Participation](#)

Will there be families with young children services? Absolutely! Gail Eisenberg is returning to lead our services. These services will also be streamed. Rabbi Crane and Cantor Roytman will also participate. Before Rosh Hashanah, families with young children will be able to pick up an "Apples and Honey Box," filled with items to use during the virtual Families with Littles High Holiday services.

Will there be family services? Absolutely! They will immediately follow our main service. Rabbi Crane and Cantor Roytman will lead these services with Aaron Frankel. These will also be streamed.

Will there be a choir? We love our BHBE choir, however, there is no way to sing live with a choir for these High Holidays safely. The Cantor will be accompanied by Julia Smulson, whose beautiful voice will elevate our prayer services. The Smulson family and Cantor's family quarantined together, enabling them to sing in close proximity.

Will in-person service attendees have to wear a mask? Everyone attending in-person services will be required to wear a mask at all times, starting when reaching the BHBE parking lot (whether walking or driving).

Will High Holidays services be meaningful, no matter the setting or considerations made? Yes! We are working tirelessly to ensure that the 5781 High Holidays, no matter how our community members engage, will be meaningful, prayerful, and accessible.

How else will we be able to connect with BHBE throughout the High Holidays? We will offer a robust schedule of learning, prayer, and communal opportunities throughout the Hebrew month of Elul, in preparation for the High Holidays. We will share this information soon.

Will we hear the Shofar?

Because the first day of Rosh Hashanah is Shabbat, we only sound the Shofar on Rosh Hashanah Day II. According to the CJLS' guidance, one can fulfill their obligation of hearing the Shofar over our live stream. Additionally, we're seeking those who can sound the Shofar, and would be interested, to sound the Shofar in their neighborhoods for other community members who live close by.

Could plans for the High Holidays change last minute? Unfortunately, yes. This is the nature of the pandemic. However, we are preparing for all eventualities. Should Illinois return to Stage 3 in *Restore Illinois*, we will need to adjust accordingly.

What if I have other questions and concerns that were not addressed here? For questions about aspects of prayer, ritual, or halakhah, contact Rabbi Crane or Cantor Roytman; for questions on membership and streaming, contact Michael Kahn; for questions about the decisions we are making in light of the pandemic, contact Keri Bahar.