



High Holidays 5782

Letter about High Holiday Services in the Leo Baeck Gym

This year we are offering our community the opportunity to attend non-livestreamed services in the Leo Baeck gym.

With appropriate physical distancing, this will allow an additional 50 people to attend in-person services on five occasions:

- (1, 2) Each morning of Rosh Hashana for Shacharit and Musaf
- (3) The evening of Yom Kippur for Kol Nidre and Ma'ariv
- (4) Yom Kippur morning for Shacharit and Musafand
- (5) Yom Kippur afternoon for Mincha, Yizkor and Neila services, to conclude Yom Kippur.

Rabbis Elkin and Weiss have written about the challenges of making services that usually last much longer adhere to a 2-hour time limit. Our ancient rabbis created a basic structure for all our services – each part of the service building upon the other, creating a spiritual flow. Distilling the essence of our rich high holidays' liturgy and deciding which prayers to include, while retaining the integrity of this structure, is a painstaking process. The same considerations of tradition and time that guided Rabbis Elkin and Weiss have guided me as well, but there will be some variations in what we have chosen to include in each service.

The gym service, because it is not being live-streamed, can be more informal, and, being lay-led, it will offer more opportunities for participation by attendees. The physical space in the gym, while ample, is quite plain; it is after all, a gym. But I anticipate that our presence and our kavannah-filled davening will help us transform it into a place of holiness (kedusha).

Ruth Rohn