

Dear HEA Community,

We are proud to share with you **a new vision** for HEA High Holy Days in 5781. This year's holidays are not what we had expected. Nonetheless, the vision we have for High Holy Days also serves to advance the mission of HEA: **to inspire lives of meaning and connection** through the wisdom of Judaism and the bonds of our people. We invite you to be part of a sacred covenant:

We pledge to produce a powerful and dynamic High Holy Day experience for you.

We will ask that **you commit** to play an active role in making this vision a reality in your home.

Together, we will show just how far Congregation HEA can reach.

This year's High Holy Days will be an experience like no other. Instead of two services, we will broadcast **a single, high quality video worship experience** that we are crafting specifically for 5781. We will encourage members to view in small, safe, **Prayer Pods** with family and friends. And, we invite our members in the coming weeks to **Elul in the Shul** – an exclusive opportunity for HEA members to visit the synagogue and receive prayerbooks and gifts to enhance the experience at home.

In these pages we will share with you an array of **offerings and experiences** in the weeks leading up to and including the holidays. Stay tuned to our website and emails to learn more about how we, together, will mark this most poignant season of renewal. In partnership, we will bring everyone in our community **together** in the most meaningful sense of the word.

*Check back often
for more holiday guidance,
schedules, and information:
HEAdenver.org/HHD*

L'Shanah Tova Tikatevu,
Rabbi Bruce Dollin
Laura Intfen, CEO
Rabbi Salomon Gruenwald
Cantor Arielle Green

Our Pledge – Your Commitment

We, the clergy and staff of HEA, along with the members of our Board of Directors and volunteer committees, pledge our dedication to the mission of HEA: to inspire lives of meaning and connection.

We pledge to accompany you on your life's journeys.

We pledge to serve the spiritual needs of our members.

We pledge to guide our community in creating bonds with one another.

We pledge to demonstrate leadership and vision, especially in trying times.

We pledge to help you grow and flourish amidst it all.

We call upon you to **believe in the transformative power of sacred community** to heal, celebrate, and help us dream of a better world. We invite you to be a **partner** in forging a bold path forward. **We ask for your commitment** –

Your commitment to personal growth and renewal through the spiritual journey of High Holy Days.

Your commitment to supporting your friends and family in creating shared experiences together.

Your commitment to embrace the traditions and wisdom of our ancestors to awaken your soul.

Your commitment to the hard work of Teshuvah – renewal and return.

Your commitment to the health of the HEA community through your ongoing membership so that we, **together**, can continue to serve the Denver Jewish community.

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A Vision for Empowered Community – Ruach and Relationship.

At HEA, we believe that Judaism can transform our lives for the better through Ruach - the spiritual practices and rituals of our tradition – and through deep interpersonal relationships.

Before the Covid-19 pandemic, HEA was embarking on a **renewed vision** – to cultivate an empowered self-generating community where **members feel supported by clergy and staff to create intimate Jewish experiences together with friends**. That vision has not changed because of the pandemic. Indeed, this crisis offers an opportunity to **lean in to the challenge** of making a large synagogue feel like a community of small groups. Our vision for High Holy Days is grounded in the idea that we thrive as humans when we experience life's moments in the company of others.

Jewish Values in a Time of Danger

Nothing can replace the feeling of grandeur being in the presence of our majestic ark, surrounded by the voices of hundreds of fellow worshipers, carried by the beautiful melodies of Cantor Arielle Green. Neither can we reproduce the experience of joining our voices with Ari Feingold and the Davenning Team at Shir Hadash. At the same time, we recognize that no religious value can be prioritized over the **health and safety** of each and every member of our community.

*We thrive as humans when
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HEA staff consulted with a committee of member volunteers who brought together a wide range of expertise to **imagine how best to serve our community while protecting the health of our people** and complying with state and local regulations. **We are confronted by the reality that there is no safe way to gather nearly 2000 people. Nor is there a way to serve some in person while excluding others.** The only way to prioritize and serve all of our people is to keep our physical distance from one another while connecting through technology. For this reason,

congregants are invited to view High Holy Days services from home in small Prayer Pods. There will be no in-person attendance. At the same time, we invite you to **visit the synagogue during Elul** – the month of spiritual preparation leading up to Rosh Hashanah. Please read on to learn more about High Holy Day worship in Prayer Pods and Elul in the Shul.

Our High Holy Days This Year – At a Distance, But Not Alone.

An Experience Like No Other

For High Holy Days 5781, we will offer a **single high quality remote worship experience crafted for the online format** that brings together the sacred elements of our Traditional Service with the energy of Shir Hadash. We have made a **considerable investment** in cameras and audio-visual technology that will enable us to produce a high definition streaming experience, enhance by interactive features, online content, and multiple angles. Some elements of the services will be **unbundled** so that worshipers can access the parts of the service they find most meaningful.

Prayer Pods: High Holy Days with Family and Friends

While large gatherings are not advisable at this time, we are all learning how to move forward in ways that mitigate risk. Masks and good hygiene are effective in preventing virus spread. We have also learned that we can take a modest risk by limiting our exposure to a **small circle of people**, so-called pods. In our pods, we can gather in small groups while maintaining distance, preferably outdoors where virus particles quickly dissipate. Grandparents are visiting with their grandchildren in this way and friends are hosting one another in their yards. We can do the same for High Holy Days.

Being at home this year for the High Holy Days doesn't mean we have to be alone. HEA strongly encourages members to **participate in services online in the company of small Prayer Pods**. Whether in person or a Virtual Prayer Pod over the internet, **a Prayer Pod is what you make of it**.

We ask you to commit the effort to organize yourself, your family, and friends into safe groups to participate in our remote services. We pledge to provide a high quality service on our side of the camera. We ask you to create an atmosphere of reverence and celebration on your side of the screen. We will offer you suggestions, tips and guidance for forming your Prayer Pod. Your Prayer Pod can meet in person using prudent precautions, or you can form a Virtual Prayer Pod using a video conferencing service like Zoom or FaceTime. We suggest organizing your Prayer Pod right away and establishing with your group the practices you will need to stay safe. Prepare how you will view the services. It isn't difficult to set up a computer or internet-enabled television in a backyard. We want you to **have a reason to dress up** for the holidays and **enjoy the company of family and friends** just as we would at synagogue. You might choose to plan a festive Yom Tov potluck picnic for Rosh Hashanah or augment your Yom Kippur experience with learning and discussion with your Prayer Pod.

We pledge to provide a high quality service on our side of the camera. We ask you to create an atmosphere of reverence and celebration on your side of the screen.

Elul in the Shul – Your Spiritual Check-In

We begin to prepare ourselves spiritually for Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur during the month of Elul. Traditionally this is a time when we gather for penitential prayers (Selichot) in the synagogue and we engage in the intense self-reflection of Teshuvah – return, renewal and repentance. We seek to repair our relationships and commit ourselves to improving in the year ahead.

This year we invite you to **Elul in the Shul**. Though we cannot gather hundreds of people in the sanctuary on the holidays, we will make it possible for you and your family to **safely visit the HEA sanctuary for a personal, intimate experience** in preparation for the holidays. We are excited to provide this **exclusive opportunity for our members**. This will be your chance to borrow machzors (prayer books), **meet Cantor Arielle Green**, receive a blessing from the rabbis, and hear the shofar. We will send you home with your own **HEA High Holy Days Care Package** complete with machzors and other resources to enrich your holiday experience. Each family will have an opportunity for personal prayer and a photograph in front of our majestic ark, with the Torah scrolls dressed in their holiday whites.

*Together, we will
show just how far
HEA can reach.*

For those who would prefer not to enter the building, we will offer a similar “Drive-In” experience in the HEA parking lot and opportunities to drop in to pick up a care package. Check our website for several opportunities starting on August 23.

A Sacred Partnership

High Holy Days 5781 will be historic. **We pledge**, as a community, to apply our ingenuity and spirit to this moment, creating inviting, and meaningful services that we will remember for years to come. **We ask for your commitment, courage and faith**. We need one another more than ever. We will do our part. But perhaps, more than ever, this year’s High Holy Days will truly be a sacred partnership. **It will be up to each of us to play our role** in making this Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur the experience we need it to be. **Together**, we will show just how far HEA can reach.

Sacred Preparations

Experiences, Learning, and Resources to Enhance your High Holy Days

Throughout the month of Elul, HEA will offer members opportunities to visit our synagogue building for a pre-holiday spiritual check-in.

*Please visit
HEA**denver.org**/HHD
for more details and to register for
events.*

Elul in the Shul – In person, Drive-In, or Drop By

Small in-person gatherings in the Sanctuary or HEA parking lot. Blessings from the rabbis and music by Cantor Arielle Green. Hear the Shofar and go home with a care package to enhance your celebration at home.

Organize Your Prayer Pods – Small Groups in person and online

Where will you be for High Holy Days? Start making your plans now for a safe and meaningful Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur with close family and friends. Plan how you will transform your home, patio, or yard into a sacred space. Prefer not to venture out? Organize a virtual Prayer Pod to experience services with family and friends online.

High Holy Day Informational Forums

Stay tuned and stay in the know with opportunities to learn about how best to participate in High Holy Days and ask questions.

Learning with HEA Clergy

Classes and other pre-holiday learning opportunities. More information to come.

High Holy Day Online Offerings

While these holidays will certainly be different than any we have experienced in the past, they will also transcend everything we have done thus far online to ensure your Jewish life continues to thrive in new, surprising, and authentic ways.

Live High Holy Day Services – A single live online service special for internet streaming in 5781

Live services broadcast from HEA lead by Rabbi Dollin, Rabbi Gruenwald, Cantor Green, and a small group of prayer leaders, augmented by pre-recorded content.

Rosh Hashanah – September 18-20,

Kol Nidre - September 27

Yom Kippur - September 28

Yizkor – September 28.

A dedicated service to honor our loved ones. This year's special Yizkor will give mourner's an expanded opportunity to remember and reflect.

Yom Kippur Mincha and Ne'ilah – September 28

Yom Kippur Learning Sessions (Descriptions are Placeholders)

Explore the liturgy and texts of the High Holy Days season with community educators (more information to come)

Virtual Lobby

We come to services to pray but we also come to schmooze. We will offer a virtual lobby on Zoom where you can chat with others.

Youth Services

High Holy Day services for families with young children each day of the holidays at 9 am.