

## PRAYERS UPON RETURNING TO THE SANCTUARY AS THE PANDEMIC EBBS

### On Re-entering Our Sacred Space After the Quarantine

*Trisha Arlin*

Blessed Wholeness,  
Our eyes are open wide  
As we walk into our familiar sacred space.  
For the first time in over a year.  
Colors are brighter,  
The sanctuary is larger,  
And the sounds of our voices, together, are luscious.  
We swim in our profound appreciation for what we once took for granted  
And we can't stop smiling at our friends  
And marveling at how good they look to us.  
We hug,  
We breathe in their smells,  
It's so exciting!  
And at last  
We can pray and we will be heard  
We can mourn and we will be seen.  
We are not alone.

Blessed Holy Wholeness  
We give thanks and pray that we will remember how this felt  
Next week  
And next year.  
Here we are.  
It is good.  
Amen

### Ma Tovv

*Ma tovu ohalecha Ya'akov,  
Mish'k'no'techa Yisrael.  
Va'ani b'rov chas'd'cha avo veitecha,  
Eshtachaveh el heichal kod-sh'cha b'yiratecha.  
Adonai ahavti m'on beitecha, u'm'kom mishkan k'vodecha  
Va'ani eshtachaveh v'echra'a, ev'r'cha lifnei Adonai osi.  
Va'ani t'filati l'cha, Adonai eit ratzon.  
Elohim, b'rov chasdecha, aneini be'emet yishecha*

How lovely are your tents, O Jacob,  
Your dwelling places, O Israel,  
In your abundant lovingkindness, O God, let me enter Your house,

Reverently to worship in Your holy temple.  
Adonai, I love Your house, the place where Your glory dwells.  
So I would worship with humility, I would seek the blessing in the  
Presence of God, my Maker.  
To You, then, Adonai, does my prayer go forth.  
May this be a time of joy and favor.  
In Your great love, O God, answer me with Your saving truth

## **Blessing for Essential Workers**

*Trisha Arlin (adapted)*

Dear God,  
Bless those who got us here.

The ones who sustained us.  
Those who treated us.  
The ones who vaccinated us.  
Those who made treatments and vaccines possible.  
The ones who worked in medical facilities, in food, transportation and shipping.  
The ones who helped maintain our homes and facilities.  
The ones whose work made everyday life possible.  
The ones who fed us and sustained us.  
The ones who watched over our health.  
The ones who kept us safe.  
The ones who healed us.  
The ones that kept us connected and supported.  
The ones who listened to us.  
The ones who prayed *with* us and the ones who prayed *for* us.  
The ones who worked on pandemic task forces and re-opening committees.  
The ones who led zoom gatherings and who behind the scenes helped us gather online.

May we let them know how much they are appreciated, and repay our debts to them with kindness.  
May God bless them for their courage, dedication and sacrifice.  
May God watch over them, protect them, grant them health, prosperity and joy.

## **Tefillat ha=Derech: Thanking God for Bringing Us This Far On Our Journey**

*Adapted from prayer by Rabbi Sonja K. Pilz*

Mekor ha-Chayyim - You, Lord, who are the Wellspring of all Life,  
Our hearts have been heavy for more than a year  
As we have missed gathering in the traditional way  
We have missed being actually meeting in person together  
Feeling the energy of each other's presence and experiencing Your Presence in our midst.

Still, with faith in You, we have journeyed together;  
A journey seemingly with no ending;  
And yet, we finally see the light dawning on the horizon.

Some of us are rushing forward,  
Some are slowing down.  
Some can't get there quick enough.  
Others move more slowly, with greater caution.  
But all of us advance toward the light, filled with a sense of hope and promise.

We thank You -- Mekor ha-Hayyim - the Wellspring of all Life --  
For implanting within us the imagination and the will to breach the gap.  
For the creativity that has been birthed out of this season of isolation.  
For those who have stepped up and given their hearts, time and talents to us all.  
For the technology that has brought our congregation, learning, prayer, fellowship and action into our homes  
Not only bringing those of us in Cleveland together, but blessing us with new online members of our congregational family across the country and around the globe.  
Who would have imagined that we could worship together and find connection even when we are alone?

As we move forward from darkness toward light and from trepidation to what we hope will be a great day of celebration, we pray from the depths of our hearts:

God, grant us wisdom to know whether it is safe for us to come into Your house.  
May those not ready to come continue to find community through our online presence.  
Teach us patience and respect for those who feel the need to move at a different pace.  
Remind us to always place first our concern for those who are still vulnerable.  
Implant within us a caring heart that will stay alert to the needs of others.

As our ancestors drew life saving water from Miriam's well which followed them in their wilderness journey, so may we continue to draw resilience, strength and blessing from You, M'kor ha-Chayyim, Well-Spring of Life. For we know that wherever we go, You are with us.

And let us say: Amen.

## **Birkat Ha-Gomel**

*Baruch atah Adonai Eloheynu melech ha-olam, ha-gomel l'chayyim tovim she-g'malanu kol tov.*

Blessed are You Adonai, our God, who shows loving kindness to all and has dealt graciously with us. We pray that you continue to show us kindness and watch over us always.

## **Shehecheyanu**

*Baruch atah Adonai Eloheynuy melech ha-olam she-hecheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higyanu lazman hazeh.*

Blessed are You Adonai our God, who has kept us in life, sustained us and enabled us to reach this day.