



Iyyar 5781 | Monday, 19th April 2021

London, England | Atlanta, Georgia

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Century-Old Atlanta Sephardic Community Partners to Create New Prayerbook

Or veShalom and Izzun Books announce the release of Siddur Masorti, Volume II (Shabbat + Festivals)

Siddur Masorti, a new Sephardi siddur which made waves last year with the release of its first volume, is proud to announce that a second volume, for Shabbat and Festivals, will be released in Autumn 2021 as part of an exclusive and exciting community partnership with [Congregation Or veShalom](#) in Atlanta, Georgia.

Congregation Or VeShalom (OVS) is a historic community. Originally established by immigrants from Turkey and Rhodes in 1914, they have continued to embrace and enhance the traditions of Sephardic Judaism in Atlanta ever since. Having used multiple *siddurim* without finding one that meets the congregation's needs for the present and the future, OVS feels that Siddur Masorti is an answer to the issues that they and many other modern-day Sephardic communities are struggling with. Rabbi Josh Hearshen, who identified OVS as 'a uniquely-situated congregation that is aware of the past and looking to the future' said: "this siddur will allow us to remain true to who we are and engage our entire community in growing into who we want to and can be."

An OVS congregant said about the project,

For the first time in many generations we will have a siddur that is designed for someone who is curious. You can pick it up, and open it and learn from it – even when not in the synagogue. Congregants can explore and expand their spirituality in a way that previous siddurim have not allowed them to do.

Dr. Ellis Hedaya, chair of the Religious Practice Committee said:

We at OVS are delighted to have the opportunity to be the first congregation to use a modern Sephardic siddur, rooted in the past that will allow us to grow into the future. We are looking forward to this collaboration.

The volume is centred around tradition, accessibility and beauty. It celebrates traditional Sephardic liturgy, inclusive of a diversity of Sephardi/Mizrahi customs and filled with beautiful *piyyutim* (songs and poetry) and psalm texts. However, accessibility is at its core, with an unprecedented full transliteration, guiding commentary, and adaptations for use by all genders. Underpinning all this is a commitment to beauty, with every page a digital homage to the illuminated Sephardic manuscripts of the past.

David A.M. Wilensky, [writing in the Jewish News of Northern California](#) said about our first volume:

[Siddur Masorti] is my favorite new siddur in years, a must-have for any lover of Jewish liturgy. The sturdy hardcover volume — the first ever gender-egalitarian Sephardi siddur — is visually stunning inside and out. I was slack-jawed the first time I saw it.

With the support of Congregation Or veShalom, Izzun Books is very excited to bring this second volume to market. We look forward to seeing Siddur Masorti in use at OVS and to continuing to work together to develop the literacy and visibility of the modern Sephardi world. For updates on the progress and release dates for Volume 2, [follow Siddur Masorti on Facebook](#) or sign-up to our newsletter on [our website](#).

Isaac Treuherz, co-Editor of Siddur Masorti, said:

18 months ago, feeling a real niche in the Sephardi world, we announced the release of a completely grassroots weekday siddur, expecting that perhaps some individual worshippers scattered around the world could be interested in something that presents their *minhagim* in a more accessible and beautiful format. We couldn't have been more blown away by the explosion of support and interest followed, and are humbled to now publish directly to the *tevah* thanks to the support of OVS. We hope they are the first of many communities to adopt this siddur and use it to reinvigorate love of Sephardi services!