

**Creating the Sacred Around Us**  
*Preparing Our Home for the High Holidays*

According to the Talmud (Megilah 29a), “God will dwell in the holy spaces that we create, for they are the ancient Temple in miniature.”

We need not a grand sanctuary and elevated architecture to create the sacred, to draw closer to God, or to experience the holy. Throughout our Jewish tradition, we have created holy spaces wherever we are – the wilderness, the shtetl, the ship, the ghetto, the home. All of these places share a term, mikdash me’at – the small temple.

As the pandemic causes us to be physically apart from each other and the Temple Beth Am building, we are called upon to use the homes around us to create the holy.

This week, as an individual or as a family, take time to prepare for the High Holidays in our mikdash me’at – our small temples at home.

**Consider and Discuss These Prompts Together**

-What sort of space is most meaningful to me? Where can I find the most calm? Is it a room? Is it inside or outside? Is there a color or type of furniture or a temperature that helps me create the right atmosphere?

-What brings me comfort? Is it particular objects, sentimental or special? Do I need the right place to sit, or recline? Will there be music playing or snacks nearby?

-What makes this sacred space in my home different? What must be removed to separate from work or school? What must be added to make it unique?

-What makes my space a Jewish space? Are there Jewish ritual objects, such as a mezuzah, Shabbat candlesticks, books, or more? Is it being surrounded by Hebrew? Pictures of Jewish events and experiences? Ancestors past or leaders of the present and future?

We are in the midst of Elul, the month before the High Holidays, when we prepare ourselves – our hearts, our bodies, and the space around us. Take time to sit and talk as a family. Move furniture around. Think creatively about where you are. Go outside and leave the walls behind.

It is time to prepare your midkash me’at for our new year ahead. May we all have a sweet, happy, and healthy New Year. Shana Tova!