



## Shmini Atzeret

As Shabbat ends each week, we perform the ritual of Havdalah, a ceremony that marks the end of the holiest day of the week. We use a candle, to remind us of the warmth Shabbat brought into our lives. Wine represents the joy of Shabbat, and the spices are meant to leave us with the lingering fragrance of the day as we move into the week. Havdalah is not just there to mark the separation of the holy from the mundane: it also helps us create a moment where we hold on, for just a few moments more, to the day of rest.

### *"Just one more day..."*

The holiday of Shmini Atzeret, the Eighth Day of Assembly, is perhaps one of the most mystifying holidays. It falls after the seven days of Sukkot. (There is much debate about whether it is part of Sukkot or not. The Torah and Talmud each declare, at various times, that Shmini Atzeret is both part and not part of Sukkot.) There are no special foods to eat or rituals to perform; even special symbols are absent. This holiday is, well, just a holiday, and this makes it even more of an oddity in our religion, because every other holiday celebrates a moment in our history.

So what is Shmini Atzeret about, and why did this all begin with a description of Havdalah? Shmini Atzeret is the final holy day of the season (Simchat Torah is a later Rabbinic development, not a Biblical holiday. Further, it is only a separate day in the Diaspora. In Israel, Shmini Atzeret and Simchat Torah are the same day). Tishrei is an intense month; Rosh HaShanah, Yom Kippur, and Sukkot all require our attention and participation. All of them take a lot of work, from the spiritual work of Rosh HaShanah and Yom Kippur, to the physical work of building the Sukkah. Then, it all just ends. We are meant to go back to our regular, mundane lives, with no major holiday until spring, when we will celebrate Purim and Passover.

Shmini Atzeret serves as a type of Havdalah, a separation between the holy and the common. It is a final day to linger in the Sukkah, enjoy and reflect on the days behind us and pause once more before returning to our everyday lives.

The Biblical commentator Rashi brings a Midrash (a Rabbinic interpretation) to describe Shmini Atzeret. He says it is like a King's Banquet, where the King has celebrated with his children for days and days. When the banquet finally ends, the king says to the children, "Stay with me just one day more, so that we can enjoy each other's presence."

***Ending the High Holiday season. let us take one last moment. one last breath together. to reflect and to spend one more day before the real world returns. before we must take down our Sukkah. pack away the Shofar and begin putting the Teshuvah we so desperately sought into action.***

Shmini Atzeret is the separation that gives us one more quiet, holy moment, before it all changes again.

## Simchat Torah



### *We begin again*

Could there be a better message to end the holiday period than that of Simchat Torah? We complete the reading of the Torah and immediately begin reading it anew.

This past month we have worked tirelessly, and sometimes hungrily, searching our souls and our actions, not only for what challenged us this past year, but also for how we can be better, how we can make the lives of our friends and families better, ways in which we can improve the world. We have pledged ourselves to the community, to Judaism, to God; we have set ourselves on the path of Teshuvah, redemption and return. Simchat Torah reminds us, one final time, despite all our prayers, action is still required to make turn those promises into reality.

Completing the reading of the Torah isn't a quiet moment. It is done with much dancing, singing, and fanfare. Late into the night, and again the next morning, we physically grab hold of the Torah and hold it tight as we celebrate. On the morning of the holiday, each of us is given the honor of approaching the Torah and being called to it, to help finish the story one more time. And the moment it is done, we start again.



***Beginning once more.*** we read the words that our people have read for thousands of years. We retell the well-worn stories of our ancestors, relive the Creation, Exodus, and wandering.

Yet we also have the chance to learn something new, to take who we are this year and use it to pull from the Torah lessons and messages never before understood.

***Join us this year.***

***Grasp the Torah. dance with it. literally and figuratively.***

***Take hold of it and. once again. make it your own.***

### P3 POWER PACK PROGRAM

Did you know that many elementary school students in our area have very little to eat between their Friday school lunch and Monday school breakfast? The Power Pack Program (P3), spearheaded by Food For Others, provides these children with food to take home and eat over the weekend. Through our partnership with Food For Others, we provide Power Packs to students at nearby Annandale Terrace Elementary School.

**Join us and our interfaith partners at St. Mark's Catholic Church for our annual Interfaith Power Pack on Sunday, November 3 at 2:00pm.**

*You can also help by donating any of the items listed below.  
Donations may be left in the wooden box outside the Youth Lobby.  
Single-serving size only; please no glass containers.*

- Mac & Cheese Cups or Packets (Velveeta or Kraft)
- Chili Cups
- Tuna/Chicken Salad Kits with Crackers (Bumble Bee or Starkist)
- Chef Boyardee Beefaroni, Ravioli, Spaghetti & Meatballs, Chicken & Rice, etc.
- 100% Fruit Juice Boxes or Capri Sun Juice Packets
- Shelf Stable Milk (Horizon or YooHoo)

*Monetary donations can be made by check to Olam Tikvah with "Power Pack" in the memo line.*

### The Sukkah

After the gates close  
leaving us alone  
facing an unknown year  
three fragile walls  
invite us in  
sheltering from the world  
and opening a connection  
with the sky.

Yes, yes, the frail hut says,  
we are all wanderers  
in our precarious havens.

Make this transience holy

*Karen Alkalay-Gut*



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### Open Letter TO THE WORLD

We, the families of the Pittsburgh Synagogue Shooting, want to thank you for your support and love over the past year.

Our families lost 11 irreplaceable, beautiful Jewish souls. The sorrow and agony was deeply personal and unending. Through your unwavering support, you showed us that we are all one in our sorrow. You showed that the mindless hate that stole our loved ones has no place in America.

Thank you for showing us that we are one Community - one Jewish, one interfaith, one Pittsburgh, one country, and one world. We are truly stronger together.

*With love from the families of:*

Joyce Fienberg  
Richard Gottfried  
Rose Mallinger  
Jerry Rabinowitz

Cecil Rosenthal  
David Rosenthal  
Bernice Simon  
Sylvan Simon

Daniel Stein  
Melvin Wax  
Irving Younger



## OTRS Staff starts the year thinking out of the box

*Debra Beland Ackerman, Director of Education and Youth Activities*



At our first OTRS staff meeting for 2019-2020, I asked our teachers to put themselves into three groups around the room. Each group was handed a board game and given the same instructions—use what is in the box to create something new. It could be a toy, an art piece, a machine, an activity—they could literally do anything they wanted, except play the game as designed. I gave them five minutes to work together and then asked them to present their “new thing” to the rest of the group.

For the teachers who had more familiar games, like checkers, it was a little more challenging to work against what they knew the pieces were designed to do, while the group who got a game nobody had ever played before found it easier to imagine possibilities, based on the parts in the box. But all of our teachers succeeded in the task and created new concepts out of items that had a different initial purpose.



Following the exercise, I brought the teachers back together to talk about the intent of our activity. Each year, we begin school with familiar faces, familiar spaces, and texts and rituals that have been part of Jewish life and learning for generations. It's easy to simply use all those things to do what we've always done, the way we've always done it. This year, I told them, I want us to use what—and who—we have in new and different ways.

When you read about Jewish education, you often feel like everything falls into one of two camps. Half of the literature seems to suggest that the way we educate our children Jewishly is broken, that we need to toss out all the old stuff and create all new stuff, because everyone knows that old is bad and new is good.

The other half seems to believe that the problem isn't the stuff, but instead the people receiving it; that what has always worked should continue to work, because it always worked before, and therefore what we really need to do is figure out how convince our learners that they are approaching things the wrong way.



I believe that the truth lies squarely in the middle of these two arguments. The beauty of Jewish learning is that we are always turning it, changing it, adapting it, looking through a new lens. We don't need new stuff, and we don't need to push our learners into the past. What we need to do is take the amazing things we already have and find new ways to bring it to them.

Just as a deck of Taboo cards can be reimaged into a game to explore Jewish identity (which was one of the ideas from our workshop), material that was once lectured about by a teacher in front of the room can become a small group project done by 4th graders, using art or music to explore Torah.

The prayer instruction of my own religious school education, which involved endless hours of “now repeat after me,” can become three or four students sitting around a stack of legos on the floor, each block with a word of Hebrew taped to the side, assembled as a team into the first sentence of the Amidah.

My challenge to our OTRS teachers is to look at everything we have at our fingertips and figure out ways to see it from a new perspective, and then bring that new perspective to our classrooms. The truth is that many of them already do this in their classrooms, but by naming the process and making it the focus of our year, we are all speaking the same language and headed in the same direction.

OTRS is off to an amazing start this year. We have great “stuff.” We have great learners. We have great teachers. And this year our goal is to look at everything we have in new ways, without feeling like we need to follow the directions on the inside of the box.

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## Around Olam Tikvah

### B'nei Mitzvah

#### Parashat Ha'Azinu

Saturday, October 12

Kairi Galindo,



daughter of Nachay & Joshua Renne, is a 7th grader at Ormond Stone Middle School, where she plays cello in the advanced orchestra and sings in the treble choir. In addition to her musical talents, she can often be found drawing her favorite anime characters or reading her favorite mangas.

Kairi's mitzvah project is to collect donations for those in need at the US/Mexico border. She looks forward to celebrating with her family and friends.

Saturday, October 26

Ella and Eli Onstott

Parashat Bereshit

are 7th graders at Parkside Middle School in Prince William County. Ella excels at math and language arts, and also enjoys singing in the Girls Chorus at Parkside. When she's not playing catcher for her travel softball team, The Virginia Stars, she likes to paint and read.

Like Ella, Eli is a straight-A student, and enjoys social studies. Eli has a passion for all sports, and in particular has a love of baseball. He plays third base and in the outfield for his travel team, The Virginia Stars.

For their B'nai Mitzvah Project, the twins will donate 10% of their B'nei Mitzvah gifts to the **Jewish National Fund Project Baseball**, which helps bring teams together and builds state-of-the-art baseball and softball facilities in Israel. Ella and Eli are excited to celebrate with all their family and friends.

## From Our Hearts

### Kiddush Sponsors

*Thank you for your donations to the Kiddush Fund,  
in honor of your October anniversaries.*

#### October 1-3

Andrea & Greg Fabian; Karen & Josef Gurian

#### October 4-10

Andrea & David Albersheim (5); Nogah & Rob Helfant (20); Rachel & Ed Shnekendorf

#### October 11-17

Julie Silberberger & Tor Aschan (10);

Marci & Alan Benheim; Ellyn & Todd Fine; Sara & Leonard Heimowitz (45); Livia & Harold Jacob;

Rosalind Sloan & Art Levine; Evelyn & Joel Paul; Bonnie & Michael Witlin

#### October 18-24

Deborah Swichkow & Raymond Ellis; Melinda & Mark Roth

#### October 25-31

Suzanne & Joseph Rubinstein; Shari & Sidney Schwartz;

Michelle & Zachary Silberman; Alison & Joshua Stern; Aimee & Arthur Thibert

*Thank you to Jane Behrmann, Carol Shaman, Joanne Stryer, and Claire Tannenbaum  
for making anniversary calls.*

### Mazal Tov

*We wish a hearty mazal tov to...*

Elizabeth Whisnant & Kevin Hopkins, on the Bat Mitzvah of their daughter, Selilah Hopkins

Barbara & Seth Kaplan, on the Bar Mitzvah of their son, Jacob Kaplan

Ellen & Josh Oppenheim, on the birth of their granddaughter, Violet Acadia,  
daughter of Rebecca Oppenheim-McAuley & Jack McAuley

Yael Goldin & Daniel Pick, on the naming of their daughter, Ariella Florence Pick

## Tzedakah

*Thank you for your donations, which were received by August 30*

### Capital Improvement Fund

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50th wedding anniversary of Marsha & Jerry Berson, by Ellen Finberg  
65th wedding anniversary of Mimi & Len Levine, by Carol & David Ruben  
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Maxine & Ron Sherwin  
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#### R'FUAH SH'LAYMAH

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Lillian Toobin, mother of Michael,  
by the Toobin Family  
My loving husband, Jack, by Phyllis Lustig

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Jack Klevan, husband of Carol and father of Joanne and Michelle, by Debbie & Mark Weber;  
Susan & Jay Stoppelman; Fraida & Alan Zusman

#### R'FUAH SH'LAYMAH

Eileen Leshan, by Debbie & Mark Weber  
Len Levine, by Debbie & Mark Weber

### Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In appreciation for Rabbi Kalender's and Rabbi Ravski's recent Shabbat sermons,

by Elizabeth & Peter Maer

In appreciation of OT's Chevra Kaddisha,  
by Maddy Cassell

Thanks to Rabbi Evan Ravski and Rabbi David Kalender, by Karen & Howard Newman

#### IN HONOR OF

65th wedding anniversary of Mimi & Len Levine, by Sharon, Steve, Sara,  
Sam, and Emily Jellinek; Selma Kunitz  
Engagement of Joel Taubman to Marla Wolfe,  
by Barbara & Robert Cohen

#### IN MEMORY OF

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65th wedding anniversary of Mimi & Len Levine, by Joy & Tim Fleming  
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#### IN MEMORY OF

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R'FUAH SH'LAYMAH  
Eileen Leshan, by Rachele & Joel Palley  
Norman Brand, by the Toobin Family

### Tzedakah Fund

#### IN HONOR OF

65th wedding anniversary  
of Mimi & Len Levine, by Gloria Seiler  
85th birthday of Bunny Kaplan,  
by Anita & Steve Dienstfrey  
Friends of Kirby Newman,  
by Karen & Howard Newman  
David Yergin-Doniger being selected one  
of 40 under 40, by Patricia Doniger  
Norman Tursky, on his 90th birthday,  
by Amy & Steve Tursky  
Peter Maer receiving the 2019 Walter Cronkite  
Faith and Freedom Award, by Patricia Doniger

#### IN MEMORY OF

Ann Stein, by Debra & Herman Stein  
Belle Reisig, by Barry Reisig  
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Hyman Meyers, by Rebecca Pollino  
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Steve & Anita Dienstfrey;  
Andrea & Jerry Gross



**TZEDAKAH, Continued from page 6**

Jack Weinstein, by Florence Bernstein  
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 John LaBree, by Betsy & John MacCarthy  
 John MacCarthy, by Betsy & John MacCarthy  
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 Sam Eisen, by Judith Cabelli  
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 Simon Friedman, by Jacob Friedman  
 Sylvia & Stanley Gibberman,  
     by Patti & Paul Gibberman  
 Sylvia Weinstein, by Elaine Murray  
 Tillie Levine, by Gloria Seiler; Len Levine  
 William Waugh, by Betsy & John MacCarthy  
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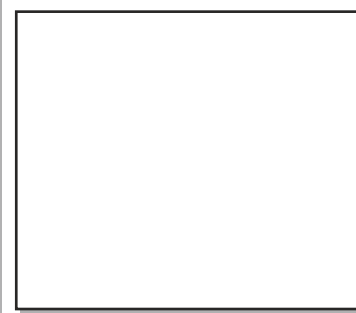
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## October–November 2019 Calendar Highlights

### OCTOBER 2019

TUE	1	9:00am	Rosh Hashanah Day 2 Service
TUE	1	7:35pm	Ma'ariv
SUN	6	10 :00am	OT's Got "Some" Talent Planning Meeting
TUE	8	6:30pm	Kol Nidre
WED	9	9:00am	Yom Kippur Sanctuary Service
WED	9	10:00am	Yom Kippur Social Hall Service
WED	9	5:00pm	Mincha, Neila, Ma'ariv, Shofar
SUN	13	6:15pm	Erev Sukkot Ma'ariv
MON	14	9:30am	Sukkot Day 1 Service
MON	14	7:15pm	Ma'ariv
TUE	15	9:30am	Sukkot Day 2 Service
TUE	15	7:15pm	Ma'ariv
WED	16	12:00pm	HAZAK Lunch in the Sukkah
WED	16	7:00pm	Men's Club Beer and Comedy in the Sukkah
SUN	20	8:30am	Hoshanah Raba
SUN	20	6:00pm	Erev Shmini Atzeret Service
MON	21	9:30am	Shmini Atzeret Service, including Yizkor
MON	21	7:00pm	Erev Simchat Torah, Ma'ariv and Hakafot
TUE	22	9:30am	Simchat Torah Service
TUE	22	7:00pm	Ma'ariv
SUN	27	9:45am	Men's Club Election Brunch

### NOVEMBER 2019

SUN	3	1:00pm	Power Pack Program at St. Mark's Catholic Church
WED	6	7:30pm	Adult Ed: What Dreams May Come
SUN	10	9:30am	Sisterhood Cider Tour
WED	13	7:30pm	Adult Ed: What Dreams May Come
SUN	17	9:00am	All Sizes Clothing Swap
SUN	17	9:30am	Young Families Play Date
SAT	23	7:00pm	OT's Got "Some" Talent Fundraiser

**Sukkot. Shmini Atzeret. and Simchat Torah 5780**

**For holiday information, [CLICK HERE.](#)**