

MEGILLAH

The MCJC shul is located at 15071 Caspar Road, Caspar, CA.
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RABBI'S NOTES



This being the beginning of Elul as I write, I've been blowing the shofar every morning for the last week (many of you have zoomed in to join me, which has been a delight). Even though it is just a hollow horn, the shofar can make so many sounds. One can blow the three segments—*tekiah* (the long blast), *shevarim* (the three intermediate notes), and *teruah* (the nine short calls.)—and, depending on how the blower's lips are held relative to the opening, the horn can purr, screech, shudder, weep and sing. The every-day-ness of sounding the shofar is interesting to me. I find it has a cumulative aspect, the sounds fresh each time but somehow accruing in my consciousness, getting stronger and more compelling. I am supposed to wake up, more and more each day. And I wonder what

that means.

The classic eleventh-century text on the shofar comes from Maimonides, from his Laws of Repentance. I remember the waking up part, but hadn't looked at the whole passage this year until just now:

Even though the blowing of the shofar on Rosh HaShanah is a Biblical decree, it hints at something, i.e., "Wake up, sleepers, from your sleep! And slumberers, arise from your slumber! Search your ways and return in teshuvah and remember your Creator! Those who forget the truth amidst the futility of the moment and are infatuated all their years with vanity and nothingness that will not help and will not save, examine your souls and improve your ways and your motivations! Let each of you abandon his wicked ways, and his thoughts which are no good."

Mishneh Torah, Repentance 3:4

That sounds pretty medieval in some ways, but, like the sound of the shofar, some of its notes vibrate deep within me: "*Those who forget the truth amidst the futility of the moment...*" Hmmm, shofar has something to do with truth.

A lot of us have been thinking about truth in recent years (and all the millennia before then) because there is so much blatant untruth around in the public world. However, in the nearer realms where most of us live most of our lives, discerning what is true is a more complex matter. What does my friend mean when he says X? What will happen if I do Y? What will help in this situation? What do I want? What do you need? What is called for in this moment? Why am I nervous? Should I say yes or no? Or maybe or not today but tomorrow?

What is it to be awake when my friend says, "Okay, sure..." but I kind of think she doesn't mean it? How can I pay real attention? Attention to what? Should I ask more questions? Back off? Take her at her word? In these realms the search for truth is endless.

There is always more truth to know, more of her soul to know, more of my own soul to know, more to understand about the moment. Not even to mention the larger context of power dynamics, class, race, gender, the moment in history, the eon, the natural order in which my friend says, "Okay, sure..."



What is it to be awake when I am annoyed or dutiful or hot to do something? How can I know what's true here? How can I decide how to act? How can I pay real attention?

“Those who forget the truth amidst the futility of the moment...” The word translated here as futility is *hevel*. You may know the famous line from Ecclesiastes: “Vanity of vanities, all is vanity.” That’s *hevel*. It comes from a Hebrew root that means vapor. “Something evanescent, unsubstantial, worthless” says my biblical lexicon. Fog.

I think I live a fair amount of my life in fog of one kind or another, distracted, preoccupied, dulled by routine, worried about things that might happen, stuck in unexamined constraints, enchanted with some concept of what I think I want, beset by what I think I should do, conforming to ideas and expectations that surround me. The shofar calls me to wake up, to shake off the fog. Then what? Then to listen, to observe, to ask, to think, to wait, to wonder, to reflect, to study. To reach towards truth.

I don’t think we ever get to the fullness of truth, at least not with regard to anything intimate and serious. There is always more than we will understand because life is deep. But we can look below the surface of the pool, wipe the fog from the window. Sometimes what we find when the fog clears is not easy to deal with. But I think there is also an aspect of pleasure, or healing, or vitality in seeing and hearing clearly, in discerning what is more deeply true about another person, a situation, our own selves, the universe.

So TEKIAH! dear friends. Let’s look forward to awakening together in this world we inhabit with each other. *L’shana tovah!*

SHABBAT MORNING SERVICES

A full Shabbat service is led by community members, with singing, chanting and silence, Torah teaching and reading, blessings for healing and peace, and time for mourners to say Kaddish. The teachers for September are listed below. We now have hybrid services, so come to the shul or Zoom from 10:30 AM until 12:30 PM.

09/02/23	<i>Ki Tavo</i>	Margaret Holub
09/09/23	<i>Nitzavim–Vayeilech</i>	Raven Deerwater
09/16/23	<i>Rosh Hashanah</i>	Margaret Holub
09/23/23	<i>Ha’Azinu</i>	Bob Evans
09/30/23	<i>Sukkot</i>	Andrea Luna

If you would like to give a Torah teaching during Shabbat services, or want more information about what’s involved, please contact Raven Deerwater at raven@taxpractitioner.com or (707) 937-1099.

ZOOM ADDRESS

We are using the Zoom address below for many MCJC events. You may or may not be asked to type in a password, which is *shalom*. Disregard the numeric passcode at the bottom of the invitation unless you’re dialing in on a landline. If you have questions or problems, contact susan.tubbesing@gmail.com.

Join: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7071836183?pwd=NzFaTkpjOXVYMDNnNnprOXlnZjVhQT09>

Meeting ID: 707 183 6183

Passcode: *shalom*

Numeric Passcode: 776001

KABBALAT SHABBAT



The Kabbalat Shabbat gathering in September will be on the 29th, when Margaret will welcome you to her sukkah on Albion Ridge Road at 6:00 PM. We will be outdoors so dress warmly. After a short service, we will share a vegetarian potluck. For directions and to let her know you are coming, call (707) 734-0311.

We have nothing scheduled for October, but November is covered. We are hoping for hosts for October 20th and December 15th. We also need hosts for 2024 if you are good at planning ahead. Please contact Mina at 937-1319 or mcohen@mcn.org to volunteer your home.

HIGH HOLY DAYS, 5784

L'Shana Tova! We wish you and your loved ones and our world a very happy and healthy new year. Below is a fairly complete schedule of services and other gatherings. This year we will be gathering in our shul for Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur services. Evening and daytime services will also be accessible on the MCJC zoom link (see page 2 above).



Selichot:

Saturday, September 9, 8:00 PM. A short, candle-lit later-evening service of preparation for the Holy Days, with chanting and time for looking within. This service will not be zoomed.

Pre-Rosh Hashana mikveh:

Friday, September 15. We will meet at 10:00 AM at the Albion Grocery and carpool together to the Middle Ridge Pond. If you do not want to meet at the store, please park at Harriet's house at 31131 Middle Ridge and walk to the pond. Please do not park your car anywhere on Middle Ridge Road. Contact Nina at ninabo@mcn.org to let her know you plan to come and with any questions. All women are invited to attend the *mikveh*, a prayerful ritual immersion in "living water."

Rosh Hashana:

Evening service Friday, September 15, 7:30-9:30 PM.

Morning service Saturday, September 16, 10:30 AM-2:00 PM

There will be a **veggie potluck lunch** following the morning service. Please bring a cold dish to serve 8-10 people, with a list of ingredients to display. You can leave food in the shul kitchen. If you are visiting from elsewhere, no need to bring food. If you make a dish which is special to you in some way, consider sharing a few words about it at the lunch. Dishes and beverages will be provided.

Community teachings and conversation, Saturday, September 16, 3:30-5:00 PM. As always we look forward to teachings from members of our community to help us enter the New Year. Look for some changes of format this year to encourage connection and conversation. Also on Zoom.

Day Two: Sunday, September 17, at Caspar Beach.

Because the first day of *Rosh Hashana* falls on Shabbat, and therefore it is not customary to sound the shofar, we will have a second day gathering. We will hear the shofar to awaken our souls and cast the crumbs of old habits into the water.

2:30 PM Celebration for children and families—shofar, apples and honey, activities for young souls

3:30-4:30 PM — Shofar service and tashlikh (casting away the crumbs of our old ways)

4:30 PM onwards — Bonfire with food puns centered by the Young Jewish Adults

Yom Kippur:

Kol Nidre Sunday September 24, 7:30-9:30 PM. This beautiful service begins our daylong journey into the Holy of Holies for renewal of our souls and our world.

Morning service Monday, September 25, 10:30 AM-2:30 PM.

Yizkor (memorial service) 4:30-5:30 PM. If you would like to add names to our ongoing community *yizkor* list, please contact Donna Montag at montag@mcn.org (by phone at 707-877-3243, but e-mail preferred) before Yom Kippur. If you have ever given us a name to be read, it will still be on the community list.

Mincha and Ne'ila, 5:30 to sundown. Also on Zoom. Community *kiddush* and simple break-fast at the shul will follow.

All are invited to continue the joy of the conclusion of Yom Kippur at potluck **Break the Fast meals at community members' homes.** Names of hosts and directions will be provided on Yom Kippur. We encourage you to go to one in your neighborhood.

General High Holy Days Information:

We encourage you to come for as little or as much of the High Holy Day services as suits you. Please do not hesitate to come in while services are underway or to leave when you need to.

We are suggesting a contribution of \$200.00 for each adult who is not already a contributing member of MCJC. Please send a check to P.O. Box 291, Little River, CA. 95456 or contribute via PayPal at the MCJC website (www.mcjc.org). It is traditional not to handle or discuss money on the holidays, but if you have any financial questions, please call Raven Deerwater, our Treasurer, soon at (707) 937-1099. As always, no one will be turned away for lack of funds.

Sukkot, Shemini Atzeret, Simchat Torah—the Season of Our Joy!

Sukkot begins at sundown, Friday, September 29th and concludes the following Friday, October 6th, at sundown. Plans are afoot for several different community gatherings during Sukkot. On September 29th, Margaret will welcome us to her sukkah on Albion Ridge Road at 6:00 PM. We hope you will consider making a sukkah and inviting guests. This can be for a potluck meal, sharing poems, crafting, singing, discussing, just sharing a cup of tea, whatever suits you and your sukkah. It can be at a set time, or people can call and drop by at mutually convenient times. If you would like to host folks in your sukkah, please let Margaret know at mholub@mcn.org or 707-734-0311.

Lulav-making—Paige and Margaret will host a gathering to make our own *lulavim* (the bundles of four species which we shake during *Sukkot*) with local species on Sunday afternoon, October 1st. This gathering will be with our group of families with young children, but people of ALL ages are so very welcome. Details to come.

Sukkot Harvest Party at Xo Kako Dile (Fortunate Farm), Wednesday, October 4th from 4:00-7:00 PM. Bring a veggie dish to share, as well as blessings and prayers. Hosted by the MCJC Justice Group and the Young Adults Group. RSVP if possible to adinam@berkeley.edu.

Shemini Atzeret-Simchat Torah: On Saturday night, October 7th we will beat willows and pray for another year of beautiful, plentiful rain, and then read the conclusion of the Torah and roll her back to her beginning where we'll read together of the creation of the world. Details to come.

If you have High Holy Day-related questions or would like to volunteer to help with some of the housekeeping tasks that make the Holy Days work for us all, please contact Lisa Fredrickson at 707-972-0884 or yes@mcn.org.

Shana Tova U'Metukah... a happy and sweet year to all!

PAIGE NOTES



Happy full moon! We jump into September this year on the full moon of Elul, halfway through our month of daily shofar blasts and *Cheshbon HaNefesh*, "taking stock of our soul." In exactly two weeks, on the new moon of Tishrei, the Rosh HaShanah portal will open, bringing us into the new year. We will journey through those ten Days of Awe, the *Yamim Nora'im*, and enter the Yom Kippur portal!

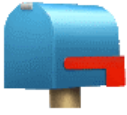
Traditionally, Yom Kippur serves not only as the Day of Repentance. but also as the Rehearsal for Our Death. Our tradition teaches us to pray on the day that we will die, but since we do not know what day we will die, we ought to pray every single day. Our tradition also teaches us to rehearse for our death in the year that we will die, but since we do not know what year that will be, to rehearse it every year. So, on Yom Kippur, we fast and refrain from sexual encounters to let go of our physical bodies, since we do not eat or enjoy physical pleasure when dead. On Yom Kippur, we wear all white, similar to the traditional burial shroud we will be buried in. On Yom Kippur, we recite the *Shema* and *Vidui*, the last words we might recite on our deathbed. In a house of mourning, we cover the mirrors so on Yom Kippur we cover the mirrors to remind us that this time revolves around spiritual reflection, not physical reflection, around how we show up for one another energetically, not superficially. Mirrors capture only the two-dimensional world and we live in so many more dimensions than that. This High Holiday season proves to be our yearly excuse to reflect on how we're showing up in this world, fully. So may this September be a moon cycle of looking for our true reflection: emotionally, mentally, and spiritually.

with blessings for a *Shanah Tova* (not only a "good year" but a "good change"),
erev rabbi paige lincenberg

MCJC BOARD MEETING

The MCJC board meets monthly. In September the meeting will take place on Tuesday, the 19th, at 5:30 PM on Zoom. If you wish to attend part of a meeting, please contact board member Susan Tubbesing at (707) 962-0565, or susan.tubbesing@gmail.com, and she will give you the address.

VOLUNTEERS OF THE MONTH



Many thanks to Nina Ravitz and Terry Clark for preparing the July-August *Megillah* for mailing. Double issue times two equals a quadruple mitzvah! In addition, all who perform this task are left with a great sense of accomplishment. If you would like to get that sense, contact Sarah at 962-0565 or sarah.nathe@gmail.com

MEGILLAH SUBSCRIPTIONS

The Mendocino *Megillah* is published monthly as an emailed PDF and an online version. The online *Megillah* is posted on the newsletter page of the MCJC website: www.mcjc.org/newsletter. Any information on changes in email address or in email notifications should be sent to Sarah Nathe at sarah.nathe@gmail.com. If you choose not to be a contributing member of MCJC, we request a \$36 annual fee for the *Megillah*.

THE RIGHTEOUS THING TO DO

It's been a full year at MCJC, with many programmatic initiatives as well as some building repair and maintenance activities. Our Rabbinic Intern (soon to be a full-fledged rabbi), Paige Lincenberg, has expanded our outreach to young Jew-ISH adults and to families of young children, in addition to sharing service leadership duties with Rabbi Holub. At the same time, our venerable shul building has been found to have some weaknesses that need to be fixed—not surprising in a structure over 100 years old. We really need your help, so, if you have not yet made your annual contribution, or if you are in a position to increase your donation, please do so. When you make a donation in memory or honor of someone, an acknowledgment card will be sent to the individual or family if you include their name and mailing address with your message. Please mail your donations to MCJC, Box 291, Little River, CA 95456, or use PayPal on the MCJC website. If you have questions about our annual budget, please contact any member of the Finance Committee: Raven Deerwater, Alix Sabin, or Susan Tubbesing.



BIG THANKS TO THE FOLLOWING DONORS



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Sandy Mendel.

Benna Kolinsky & Danny Mandelbaum in honor of Zolton Day.

Benna Kolinsky & Danny Mandelbaum in honor of the Jewish Women's Retreat and Jewish Women All Over the World.

dobby sommer in memory of her son Zachery.

Mina Cohen and Jeff Berenson to Bikkur Cholim fund in memory of Ellen Saxe's brother and Joanne Dickson.

Tanya McCurry in memory of her son, Jason Christopher McCurry, who died in August 2003 and would be 42 this August.

Fran Schwartz to Bikkur Cholim fund in memory of Joanne Dickson.

EDITORIAL POLICY

The *Mendocino Megillah* is published monthly, except for August. The deadline for article submission is the 20th of the month before publication. The editor will include all appropriate material, space permitting, with the exception of copyrighted material lacking the permission of the author. Divergent opinions are welcome. Material printed in the *Megillah* does not necessarily represent the policy or opinions of the MCJC Board of Directors.



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