

# Neilah Service



# Gathering to Worship נְעִילְה

*Reader:* Blessed is one who listens to Wisdom, who watches daily at the gates; for one who finds Wisdom finds Life. Thus if you come to a house of worship, do not remain standing at the outer gate, but enter inward, gate after gate, until you have reached the innermost gate. The gates are made to be entered.

Congregation: Open for us the gates, even as they are closing. The sun is low, the hour is late; let us enter the gates at last.

*Reader:* When we are born, countless gates stand waiting to be opened.

Congregation: But as we walk through the years, gates close behind us, one by one. Remember the unopened gates.

*Reader:* Open them before they are locked. Before it is too late, let us open the gates that lead to blessing and beauty, enter the gates of Torah and tranquility, go through the gates of kindness and compassion.

*Congregation:* Let us open the gates to those things whose value abides eternally...before the gates swing shut, before all of them are closed.

Reader: Do not remain standing at the outer gate. The gates are made to be entered. Enter, enter now!

#### Reader and Congregation

The gates are closing. We acknowledge our weaknesses.

The gates are closing. We recognize our sins.

The gates are closing. We open to forgiveness.

The gates are closing. We embrace the inner stranger.

The gates are closing. We let go of the past.

The gates are closing. We reach out to friends.

The gates are closing. We make peace with foes.

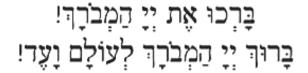
The gates are closing. We make room for death.

The gates are closing. We allow rebirth.

The gates are closing. The gates are closing. Enter, enter now!

#### Barechu

Please rise for the call to attention and sing together



Ba-re-chu et A-do-nai ha-me-vo-rach!
Ba-ruch A-do-nai ha-me-vo-rach le-o-lam va-ed!

Let us praise the Source of Life, the Essence of all things!

Let us praise the Source of Life, the Essence of all things for all time!

#### **Ahavat Olam**

We are loved. From our earliest days, we are helped and guided to find the path of justice, mercy, and humility that is the Torah's teaching.

When we quiet the mind and still the heart, when we cease the nervous doing that so often passes for purposeful living, we sense the whisper of wisdom that echoes in each and every heart.

We listen and learn, teaching ourselves and our children through tales and tradition, through law and acts of kindness.

We create mitzvot for ourselves that plant our feet on the path of righteousness. They become our guides, and we think of them daily.

Let us never withdraw our love from this path. Blessed are they who love the way of the Torah.

#### Shema

# שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל: יְיָ אֶלֹהֵינוּ, יְיָ אֶחְד! בְּרוּךְ שֵׁם כְּבוֹד מַלְכוּתוֹ לְעוֹלָם וְעֶד!

She-ma Yis-ra-el, A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu A-do-nai E-chad! Ba-ruch sheim ke-vod mal-chu-to le-o-lam va-ed!

Hear, O Israel; Adonai our God, Adonai is One! Blessed is God's glorious reign for ever and ever!

Please be seated

#### K'riat Shema

Listen! Israel, listen!
Still the mind of chatter, quiet the heart of desire.
The rush of life flows through us.
The heart of eternity beats in our own chests.

#### Listen!

We are fingers of a divine and infinite hand. We are thoughts of a divine and infinite mind.

#### Listen!

There is only One Reality, the Singular Source and Substance of all diversity.

This One alone is God. Blessed is the One who manifests the Many throughout all time.

#### V' ahavta

The V'ahavta prayer, which is part of the Shema, declares the unity of all parts of Judaism - the notion of love and ethical conduct, the belief in education, and the importance of ritual. The commitment to God - to justice, to love, to humanity - is so central to Judaism, says the prayer, that it should be bound "as a sign upon your hand" and inscribed "upon the door posts of your house."

#### Please recite together

Ve-a·hav-ta eit A-do-nai E-lo-he-cha,
be-chol le-va-ve-cha, u-ve-chol naf-she-cha, u-ve-chol me-o-de-cha.
Ve-ha-yu ha-de-va-rim ha-ei-leh,
a-sher a-no-chi me-tsa-ve-cha ha-yom, al le-va-ve-cha.
Ve-shi-nan-tam le-va-ne-cha, ve-di-bar-ta bam
be-shiv-te-cha be-vei-te-cha, u-ve-lech-te-cha va-de-rech,
u-ve-shoch-be-cha u-ve-ku-me-cha.
U-ke-shar-tam le-ot al ya-de-cha,
ve-ha-yu le-to-ta-fot bein ei-ne-cha.
U-che-tav-tam al me-zu-zot bei-te-cha u-vi-sha-re-cha.

וְאָהַבְתָּ אֵת יְיָ אֱלֹהֶיךָּ, בְּכָל-לְּבָבְךְּ, וּבְכָל-נַפְּשְׁךְּ, וּבְכָל-מְאֹדֶךָּ. וְהָיוּ הַדְּבָרִים הָאֵלֶּה, אֲשֶׁר אָנֹכִי מְצַוְּךְ הַיּוֹם, עַל-לְבָבֶךּ: וְשִׁנַּנְתָּם לְבָנֵיךּ, וְדִבּּרְתָּ בָּם בְּשִׁבְתְּךְ בְּבֵיתֶךְ, וּבְלֶכְתְּךְ בַדֶּרֶךְ וּבְשָׁכְנְּךְּ, וּבְקוּמֶךְ. וּקְשֵּרְתָּם לְאוֹת עַל-יָדֶךְ, וְהָיוּ לְטֹטָפֹת בֵּין עֵינֵיךְ, וּכְתַבְתָם עַל מְוֻזוֹת בֵּיתֶךְ וּבִשְׁעָרֶיְרִ:

With all your heart, love Life; feel freely, feel freely.
With all your mind, love Life; let no opinion make truth taboo.
With all your strength, love Life; be in this world with purpose and presence.
Respond to Life with the fullness of your life.
Be not afraid to act; only take care to act wisely and well.
Set Truth upon your heart and teach it to your children.
Recite it at home and away, morning and night.
Glove your hands with compassion, that your deeds be just.
Open your eyes to wisdom, that your vision be daring and true.
Set Mezuzot upon the doorposts of your house and upon your gates, that your going out and your coming in be for peace.

## **Forgiveness**

Forgive your neighbors the wrongs they have done you, And when you seek forgiveness, your sins will be forgiven.

If I nurse anger against another, can I ask pardon for myself? Showing no pity for others, can I then plead for my own sins?

If I, a creature of flesh, nourish resentment, Who will forgive me my sins?

Consider that life is short, and cease to hate. Remember mortality and death, and live by the commandments.

Let not the fierce sun dry one tear of pain Before you yourself have wiped it from the sufferer's eye.

But let each burning human tear drop onto your heart and there remain; Nor ever brush it off until the pain that caused it is removed.

#### Read together

For transgressions against God, the Day of Atonement atones; but for transgressions of one human being against another, the Day of Atonement does not atone, until they have made peace with one another.

#### Amidah

The Amidah, which is at the core of the Jewish worship service, is a time for meditation and contemplation. With the Amidah, we stand as individuals in a community to pray the prayers of the heart. The Amidah opens with the invocation of the matriarchs and patriarchs. These words link the generations one to another. The Amidah ends with a prayer for peace. By following the teachings of our ancestors, we hope to be granted peace and wholeness.

Please rise and read together

בָּרוּך אַתָּה יָיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ וֵאלֹהֵי אֲבוֹתִינוּ וְאִמָּהתִינוּ, אֱלֹהֵי אַבְרָהָם, אֱלֹהֵי יִצְחָק, וֵאלֹהֵי יַעֲקֹב. אֱלֹהֵי שָּׁרָה, אֱלֹהֵי רִבְקָה, וֵאלֹהֵי רָחֵל וְלֵאָה.

Ba-ruch A-ta A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu, vei-lo-hei a-vo-tei-nu ve-i-ma-tei-nu, E-lo-hei Av-ra-ham, E-lo-hei Yitz-chak, vei-lo-hei Ya-a-kov, E-lo-hei Sa-ra, e-lo-hei Riv-ka, vei-lo-hei Ra-cheil ve-Lei-a.

Blessed is the God of our ancestors, God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, God of Sarah, Rebecca, Rachel, and Leah.

Our lives are inseparable from those of our parents, our grandparents, and our other ancestors.

They beheld God in the heavens; they felt God in their hearts; they sought God in their lives.

Now their quest is ours. May we see the wonder of being.

May we have the courage to search for truth.

May we learn the path to a better life.

So shall we, by our lives and our labors, bring nearer to realization the great hope inherited from ages past, for a world transformed by liberty, justice, and peace. As our ancestors have repeated:

Zach-rei-nu le-cha-yim, me-lech cha-feits ba-cha-yim, ve-cha-te-mei-nu be-sei-fer ha-cha-yim, le-ma-a-ne-cha E-lo-him cha-yim.

Remember us unto life, O Sovereign who delights in life, and seal us in the Book of Life, O God of life.

#### Rededication

Please remain standing for a moment of silent reflection. You may wish to read the passage below.

Once more we cry out our longing And the longing of all men and women For a beginning of that wholeness We call peace.

Ever and again, we now admit,
We have turned
On our sisters and brothers.
Forsaking law, denying truth, defacing beauty.

The intelligence implanted within us We have applied to the arts of war; With our skill We make engines of terror and pain.

We have prayed for peace,
Even as we laughed at truth;
We have prayed for mercy,
And have shown none to others.

So now, again, we set ourselves on the paths that lead To peace and justice, to freedom and joy, For Israel and for all the world. We have prayed for impossible things: Peace without justice, Forgiveness without restitution, Love without sacrifice.

Again, as the shadows fall, We ask forgiveness, And again we praise The source of peace.

Grant us peace, our most precious gift, Give us the will to proclaim its message to all the people of the earth.

Make us advocates for peace, for justice, and for righteousness - In our own communities, in our country, in Israel, and throughout the world.

Strengthen our bonds of friendship with each other. Seal us in the Book of life, blessing, and peace.

### **Unity and Hope**

The day is fading; the sun is setting; the silence and peace of night descend upon the earth. Give rest now to our troubled hearts; lift up the spirit oppressed by guilt. Turn to Your children; turn to every broken heart and every burdened soul. Let us at this hour be sure of forgiveness.

From this house, we are about to return to our homes. Enter them with us that they may become sanctuaries, dwelling-places of a holy spirit. Then will our home stand firm against the storms of life, a shelter for all that is good, and a refuge from evil.

This twilight hour reminds us also of the day when, if we are faithful to ourselves, God's light will arise over all the world, and Israel's spiritual descendants - Jews and non-Jews - will be as numerous as the stars of heaven.

Teach us to recognize the meaning of our history and the challenge of our destiny, to proclaim to all this message: One humanity on earth, even as there is one God in heaven.

The day will surely come when joy will thrill all hearts. And from one end of the earth to the other will ring the exultant cry: "Hear, O Israel; hear, all creation. There is but one God."

All peoples shall share a common purpose; all nations shall join hands and exclaim in triumphant song.

#### Kadosh

# קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ, קָדוֹשׁ יְיָ צְבָאוֹת, מְלֹאׁ כְל־הָאָרֶץ כְּבוֹדוֹ.

Ka-dosh, ka-dosh A-do-nai tse-va-ot, Me-lo chol-ha-a-rets ke-vo-do.

Holy, holy, holy is the Lord of Hosts; the fullness of the whole earth reveals the glory of God.

The Lord of Hosts is exalted by justice; the holy God is sanctified by righteousness.

Blessed is the Lord, who rules in holiness.

Please be seated

## Blessing the Soul

# אָלֹהַי, נְשָׁמָה שֶׁנְּתַתְּ בִּי טְהוֹרָה הִיא.

E-lo-hai, ne-sha-ma she-na-ta-ta bi te-ho-ra hi.

My God, the life and soul which You placed within me are pure.

You breathed of Yourself into my flesh,

creating and forming in me a deep awareness of Your Presence.

It is You who constantly arouse the desire to live within me.

Sometimes You take this hope from me,

only to renew it again and again,

that I may once more praise You, my God, and God of my people.

You are the origin of all that happens,

and every soul is a part of You.

Praised are You, God,

constantly renewing life within me,

with Your breath of love.

#### The Promise of Peace

May the promise of peace be fulfilled for ourselves and for our children: "I will bring peace to the land; you shall be serene and unafraid.

I will rid the land of vicious beasts, and the sword of war shall be set aside.

They shall beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning-hooks.

Nation shall not lift up sword against nation, nor ever again shall they train for war.

Justice shall roll down like waters and righteousness as a mighty stream."

# שָׁלוֹם, שָׁלוֹם לָרְחוֹק וְלַקְּרוֹב, אָמַר יְיָ.

Sha-lom, sha-lom la-ra-chok ve-la-ka-rov, a-mar A-do-nai. Peace, peace to the far and to the near, saith the Lord.



#### Avinu Malkeinu

In the *Avinu Malkeinu* prayer, we ask that all of us be sealed in the Book of Life and that the new year be a good one for us.

The origin of the prayer dates to ancient Palestine, when Rabbi Akiba prayed to "our father, our king" for relief from a drought. It is said that his prayers were answered and the drought ended.

Please rise and chant together

A-vi-nu mal-kei-nu! [three times] cha-nei-nu va-a-nei-nu, ki ein ba-nu ma-a-sim, a-sei i-ma-nu tse-da-ka va-che-sed [repeat] ve-ho-shi-ei-nu.

Our parent, our ruler, let the gates of heaven open to our plea.

Our parent, our ruler, do not turn us away empty-handed from your presence.

Our parent, our ruler, forgive and pardon all our misdeeds.

Our parent, our ruler, have compassion on us and on our children.

Our parent, our ruler, let the new year be a good year for us.

Our parent, our ruler, seal us for blessing in the Book of Life.

A-vi-nu mal-kei-nu! [three times] cha-nei-nu va-a-nei-nu, ki ein ba-nu ma-a-sim, a-sei i-ma-nu tse-da-ka va-che-sed [repeat] ve-ho-shi-ei-nu.

Our parent, our ruler, give strength to your people everywhere.

Our parent, our ruler, make an end to all oppression.

Our parent, our ruler, hasten the time of our redemption.

Our parent, our ruler, be gracious and answer us. Treat us generously and with kindness and be our help.

A-vi-nu mal-kei-nu! [three times] cha-nei-nu va-a-nei-nu, ki ein ba-nu ma-a-sim, a-sei i-ma-nu tse-da-ka va-che-sed [repeat] ve-ho-shi-ei-nu.

#### **Choose Life**

But sure as is judgment, surer still is mercy.

It is not the death of sinners that is demanded - only that they return to the spirit of life.

The gates of forgiveness are open wide, and all who seek to enter may be at peace.

Now, as evening falls, the shadow that darkened our spirit is vanished. We celebrate the birth of a new year.

We dedicate ourselves anew to living our lives according to our principles, to letting our consciences be our guides.

We may complain of the struggle, but we cannot forget that the power to choose is the glory and greatness of our being.

We will choose life.



#### Mourners' Kaddish

Although the Kaddish is a traditional prayer for those who mourn the death of a relative or a friend, it is not about death and it is not about sadness. The Kaddish is a reaffirmation of life, a declaration that the blessing of life and the promise of peace will come true.

Please rise and recite together

יִתְצַּדֵּל וְיִתְקַדֵּשׁ שְׁמֵה רַבָּא. בְּעָלְמָא דִּי בְרָא כִרְעוּתִיה, וְיַמְלִיךְ מַלְכוּתִיה בְּחַיֵּיכוֹן וּבְיוֹמֵיכוֹן וּבְחַיֵּי דְכָל בֵּית יִשְׂרָאֵל. בַּעֲגָלָא וּבִזְמַן קָרִיב וְאִמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

Yit-ga-dal ve-yit-ka-dash she-mei ra-ba. Be-al-ma di-ve-ra chi-re-u-tei, ve-yam-lich mal-chu-tei be-cha-yei-chon u-ve-yo-mei-chon u-ve-cha-ye de-chol beit Yis-ra-eil. Ba-a-ga-la u-vi-ze-man ka-riv ve-i-me-ru: a-mein.

## יָהֵא שְׁמֵה רַבָּא מְבָרַך לְעָלַם וּלְעָלְמֵי עָלְמַיָּא:

Ye-hei she-mei ra-ba me-va-rach le-a-lam u-le-al-mei al-ma-ya:

יִתְבָּרַךְ וְיִשְׁתַּבַּח וְיִתְפָּאַר וְיִתְרוֹמַם וְיִתְנַשֵּׂא וְיִתְהַדְּר וְיִתְעַלֶּה וְיִתְהַלָּל שְׁמֵה דְּקָדְשָׁא בְּרִיךְ הוּא לְעֵלָּא מִן כָּל בִּרְכָתָא וְשִׁירְתָא תִּשְׁבְּחָתָא וְנָחֲמָתָא, דַּאֵמִירֶן בִּעָלְמָא וִאִמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

Yit-ba-rach ve-yish-ta-bach ve-yit-pa-ar ve-yit-ro-mam ve-yit-na-sei, ve-yit-ha-dar ve-yit-a-leh ve-hit-ha-lal she-mei de-ku-de-sha, be-rich hu, le-ei-la min kol bi-re-cha-ta ve-shi-ra-ta, tush-be-cha-ta ve-ne-che-ma-ta, da-a-mi-ran be-al-ma, ve-i-me-ru: a-mein.

## יְהֵא שְׁלְמַא רַבָּא מִן שְׁמַיָּא, וְחַיִּים עָלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשְׂרָאֵל וְאִמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

Ye-hei she-la-ma ra-ba min she-ma-ya, ve-cha-yim a-lei-nu ve-al kol Yis-ra-eil, ve-i-me-ru: a-mein.

# עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם בִּמְרוֹמְיו הוּא יַעְשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם עַּלֵינוּ וְעַל כָּל יִשִּׂרְאֵל, וְאִמְרוּ: אָמֵן.

O-seh sha-lom bi-me-ro-mav, hu ya-a-seh sha-lom a-lei-nu ve-al kol Yis-ra-eil, ve-i-me-ru: a-mein.

Let God's way soon prevail in our own day, in our own lives, in the life of all Israel and of all the world. And let us say: Amen.

May the blessing of peace and the promise of life come true. And let us say: Amen.

May the source of peace send peace to all who mourn and comfort to all who are bereaved. And let us say: Amen.

Please be seated

### As the New Year Begins

In the afterglow of a vanishing year, we tune our hearts to the melody of wonder.

As evening descends, memories stir; the old year echoes even as the new year begins: echoes of love and kindness; echoes of comforted sorrow; echoes of family, echoes of friends. We lift up our voices in thanksgiving, creating new echoes in honor of old.

We look ahead with hope, giving thanks for the daily miracle of renewal, for the promise of good to come, for the promise of rebirth into life and peace, serenity and safety, as the new year begins.

As the new year begins, reborn again and yet again, so is hope reborn within us! As the new year begins, let us begin again the acts of kindness, the labors of justice! As the new year begins, let us begin again the art of dreaming!

As the new year begins, let us begin again to pick up the lost threads of broken lives and shattered loves and once again weave the blanket of peace that will clothe us all in harmony.

May we, Israel, and all humankind be remembered and sealed in the Book of Life, blessing, sustenance, and peace. May it be our will to set for ourselves the great task of redemption, that this year might be a time of renewal and transformation.

#### **Oseh Shalom**

Please sing together

# עֹשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם בִּמְרוֹמִיו הוּא יַעֲשֶׂה שָׁלוֹם עָלֵינוּ וַעַל כָּל יִשִּׁרָאֵל, וָאִמְרוּ אָמֵן.

O-seh sha-lom bi-me-ro-mav, hu ya-a-seh sha-lom a-lei-nu ve-al-kol Yis-ra-el, ve-i-me-ru a-mein.

May the words of my mouth and the meditations of my heart bear witness to my deepest feelings. May the peace which reigns in the high heavens descend on us, on all Israel, and on all the world.

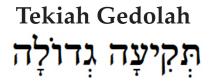
### **Closing Prayer**

And now, at the close of this day's service we say, Let the year upon which we have entered be for us, for Israel, and for all the world:

A year of hope and blessing. A year of salvation and joy.

A year of peace and contentment. A year of love and friendship.

A year of warmth between parents and children. A year of sharing, of fellowship, and of revitalization.





Together

May we find within ourselves and our people the grace and courage to inscribe ourselves and all humanity in the Book of Life.

May the coming year see us in a world at peace, crowned by Jerusalem, our holy city, herself at one and at peace.

Amen.

# לְשָׁנָה הַבְאָה בִּירוּשָׁלַיִם

L'sha-na ha-ba-ah bi-ye-ru-sha-la-yim



Please gather in front for Havdalah

#### Havdalah

The Havdalah service symbolizes transition. Havdalah is the closing ceremony, the passage from the Sabbath and Festivals into the rest of the week, from day into the night, from the ethereal to the earthly. The Havdalah service represents the underlying unity of seeming opposites: the feminine and the masculine, the spiritual and the everyday. Through Havdalah, we get a first-hand experience of how our senses are intricately connected with our spirits. We realize our bodies, our everyday lives and our humanness are in fact holy.

#### The Wine (taste)

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the fruit of the vine.

Ba-ruch a-ta A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-o-lam bo-rei p'ri ha-ga-fen.

#### The Spices (smell)

Blessed are You, Adonai our god, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of all the spices.

Ba-ruch a-ta A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-o-lam bo-rei mi-nei v'sa-mim.

#### The Candlelight Next to the Fingers (see) (feel)

Put your hands up to see your veins (the life force) through your fingernails, feel the heat. Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, Creator of the light of fire.

## בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, בּוֹרֵא מְאוֹרֵי הָאֵש.

Baruch a-ta A-do-nai E-lo-hei-nu me-lech ha-o-lam bo-rei m'o-rei ha-eish.

#### **Putting the Candle Out into the Wine** (hear)

Be really quiet so you hear the fizz of the candle in the wine.

Legend has it that if you hear the fizz, you will have a blessed week.

Please join us for a Break Fast

#### **Bibliography**

Gates of Repentence: The New Union Prayerbook for the Days of Awe (Central Conference of American Rabbis, 1978)

Unhewn Stones: A Mahzor for The Days of Awe (Rami Shapiro, 1993)

#### Acknowledgments

Kehilat Chaverim was founded in 1978 by a group of individuals who sought to form a community of friends. Periodically, members have worked to revise the services that are a composite of works from various sources. The previous version of this service was compiled by Faith Messer Fuerst and Shana Sureck. Revisions to this service were completed in 2019 by Helene Berlin, Faith Messer Fuerst, Judi Ann Goodman, Rafie Podolsky, Richie Sperber, Joan Walden, and Mary Williams.

The cover design is by Judi Ann Goodman.

