

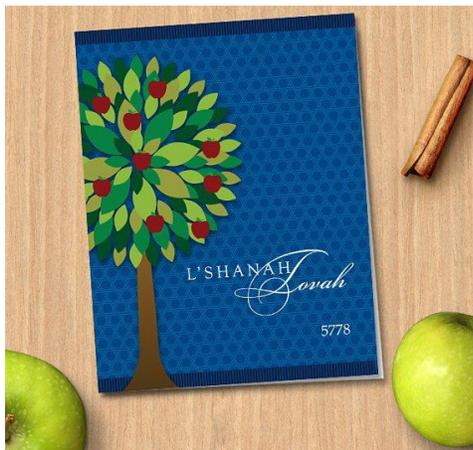


# THE CARNEGIE SHUL SHOFAR

Dr. Larry Block, President  
Michael Roteman, Writer/Editor

ROSH HASHANAH 5778 / 2017

## From the officers of The Carnegie Shul



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## President's Message

From Dr. Larry Block, President

We approach the Days of Awe — the *Yomim Nora'im* — for 5778 with trepidation and concern, not just for ourselves, our families, and our friends but also for our acquaintances and those outside our usual sphere of interaction.

Over the past few weeks, we have been witnesses to a series of calamitous natural events in southern Texas, the Caribbean, Florida, and Mexico. The loss of life, the disruption of lives, and the destruction of

property in the midst of the chaos are tragic. It is up to all of us to do what we can to mitigate the devastation unleashed by these forces of nature, whether storms, flood, or earthquakes.

Monetary donations to relief agencies and personal efforts by volunteers at the affected sites are probably the most helpful actions that can be taken.

An abridged Chassidic story that may be of help in facilitating your own personal involvement is as follows: "A young man once came to Menachem Mendl, the Rebbe of Kotzk, '...Rebbe', he said, 'Innocent people suffer..., Why does G-d allow it?' The Rebbe asked, 'Why do you care?' The young man screamed 'Someone has to care! Someone has to see the pain of the world and cry out! If not, all the suffering is meaningless. I care because I want a better world, not only for my children but for all children!' The Rebbe responded, 'If you care that much, then G-d exists. G-d exists in your caring'."

As the Torah tells us, we are all responsible for each other and must do what we can. May 5778 bring comfort and relief to those who are distressed.

## What A World

Sometimes the bad news just never seems to end. We pick up the newspaper (Or do we? It seems that many of us just read the newspaper on line if we even bother to read it at all), or we watch the news on TV (Is it real or is it fake?), and we are barraged with "Breaking News" and it is almost always something shocking or shockingly bad.

Wars continue for year after year after year, as in Afghanistan; dictators threaten the world with nuclear destruction, as in North Korea; storms cause flooding and devastation, as in Houston; the President and Congress can't agree on anything; parents abuse children; spouses abuse each other; respect for teachers and the elderly is on the decline; anti-Semitism and racial strife result in destruction and violence; the KKK and the Nazis won't go away; Antifa is promoting anarchy, and it never seems to end. And that is just the beginning.

What a horrible world we live in.

Or is it?

We travel to Niagara Falls, or Yellowstone National Park, or the Grand Canyon, or one of the many incredible places on our planet and see the incredible natural wonders that God has created.

We learn that scientists have used that amazing brain given to us by God to come up with a new discovery that may cure, or at least help to alleviate, the suffering from a disease once thought to be incurable.

Or a musician has written a fabulous new score, or an author has written an amazing new novel, or an athlete has broken some long-standing world record all with the amazing talent afforded to him/her by the Creator.

We see the joy in the eyes of parents as they gaze upon their newborn infant, another miracle and a gift from God.

We see that the State of Israel, a tiny, tiny nation surrounded by neighbors that long to see her destruction, continues to not only survive, but to thrive against unimaginable odds.

Is it really such a horrible world that we live in?

Yes, we are faced with challenges and obstacles that at times seem to be overwhelming, and sometimes we find ourselves just muddling

through. But muddling through is not good enough. Waiting for Moshiach to come and rescue us is not good enough.

As we enter the new year of 5778, let us all, each and every one of us, do more than just muddle through. Let us all strive to make this the best year that we possibly can. Let us greet others with a smile to brighten their day. Let us work together to make our city, our state, our country, and our world a better place to live and to work. Let us all reach out and lend a helping hand to someone who is in need of help. Let us attend a service at Shul and let God know how thankful we are for all that he has done for us.

And to this, let us all say, Amen.

## Welcome Rabbi Brotsky

This year we welcome back Rabbi Harvey Brotsky, formerly the Rabbi of the New Light Congregation in Squirrel Hill, who will be returning to lead us in prayer after an absence of two years.

We thoroughly enjoyed Rabbi Brotsky's davening when he was with us from 2012-2014, and look forward to davening with him again this year.

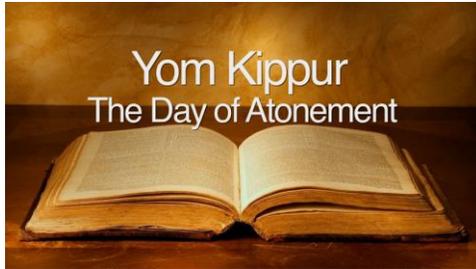
## Please



It's a new year and an opportunity to renew acquaintances with old friends, some of whom we have not seen since last Rosh Hashanah or Yom Kippur. Keep in mind, however, that loud

conversation is a distraction for those who are trying to participate in the services and/or pray. Please keep your voices down and be respectful of others, especially during Amidahs and Torah services. If you really need to kibbitz, please step outside for a few minutes rather than disrupt our services. Thank you.

## Atonement



Yom Kippur, the Day of Atonement. What a wonderful gift atonement is. It is an opportunity to receive forgiveness for our sins, even the worst of them, because *Teshuvah*, *tefilla*, and *tzedakah* shall avert the severe decree.

Teshuva, tefilla, and tzedakah - penitence, prayer, and righteous acts, shall avert the severe decree. Or will they? Yes, God will allow us to atone for our sins against him, but what about our sins against our fellow man?

To atone for sins against another person, you must first seek reconciliation with that person, righting the wrongs you committed against him or her, if possible, and that must all be done before Yom Kippur.

But what if the person against whom you sinned won't agree to reconcile? Or what if you can't locate the person against whom you sinned, or if that person has already passed away? Or what if the person against whom you're sinned doesn't know of your sin and informing them would cause unnecessary pain?

Some examples:

Your neighbor has been angry at you for several years and you really are not sure why. You decide it is time to make peace with your

neighbor and you apologize for anything that you might have done to offend the neighbor. The neighbor rejects your apology and says he wants nothing to do with you. How do you atone?

Years ago you backed into someone's car in a parking lot. You left the scene without leaving a note. You have no idea whose car you hit or how much damage you caused, if any. You now feel guilty. How do you atone?

Years ago you stole \$20 off a friend's dresser. The friend is now deceased. You now feel guilty. How do you atone?

Years ago you had a one night stand, cheating on your spouse. You have never done it again. Telling your spouse would be very hurtful. You now feel guilty. How do you atone?

You blamed someone else at work for a costly mistake that you made. That person lost his job or was punished and has no idea that you are the one who blamed him. Now he is your very good friend. How do you atone?

The good news is that you can, indeed, atone for all of these sins. In most cases, the formula of teshuva, tefilla, and tzedakah will get the job done, but the type of tzedakah might vary depending upon the particular sin. Furthermore, you can also ask for atonement for specific sins during the confessional portion of the silent Amidah.

Although you are normally expected to ask a person against whom you have sinned to forgive your sin three times, there are some situations where that is impossible, or as in the case involving the one night stand, you might cause more harm than good.

If you have a situation like those cited above, you should consult a rabbi for case by case advice.

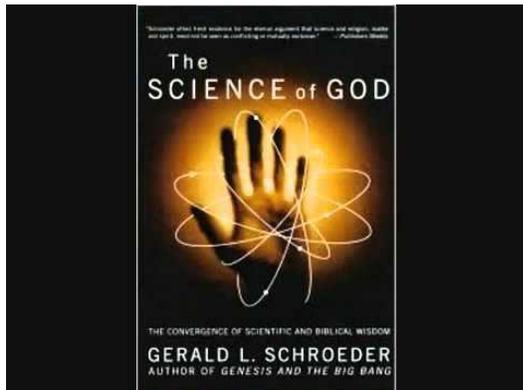
## How Old Is The World?

On Rosh Hashanah we welcome year 5778 on the Jewish calendar, so the world must be 5778 years old, right?

But scientists say the world is millions of years old, so who is right?

I am sure that many of you have asked this question, as have I, and maybe you, like me, have received many different answers.

You may have been told that a day as defined by the Jewish Calendar was different in Biblical times, or that God could have put the fossils in the ground and juggled the light arriving from distant galaxies to make the world appear to be billions of years old. There are all sorts of explanations, including one that may challenge your faith, that science is right and the Torah is simply wrong.



Aish.com has a very interesting article written by Dr. Gerald Schroeder, who earned his BSc, MSc and double-Ph.D. in Nuclear Physics and Earth and Planetary Sciences at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, where he taught physics for seven years. While a consultant at the U.S. Atomic Energy Commission he participated in the formulation of nuclear non-proliferation treaties with the former Soviet Union and witnessed the testing of six atomic bombs. He has also served as a consultant to various governments worldwide and has been published in *Time*, *Newsweek* and

*Scientific*, so I guess he is as much of a scientist as you will ever find.

But Dr. Schroeder believes that the Torah and science actually agree on the age of the earth. His article is too long to include in its entirety but here are some of the highlights:

*How long ago did the "beginning" occur? Was it, as the Bible might imply, 5700-plus years, or was it the 15 billions of years that's accepted by the scientific community?*

*The first thing we have to understand is the origin of the Biblical calendar. The Jewish year is figured by adding up the generations since Adam. Additionally, there are six days leading up to the creation to Adam. These six days are significant as well.*

*Now where do we make the zero point? On Rosh Hashana, the Jewish New Year, upon blowing the shofar, the following sentence is said: "Hayom Harat Olam — today is the birthday of the world."*

*This verse might imply that Rosh Hashana commemorates the creation of the universe. But it doesn't. Rosh Hashana commemorates the creation of the Neshama, the soul of human life. We start counting our 5700-plus years from the creation of the soul of Adam.*

*We have a clock that begins with Adam, and the six days are separate from this clock. The Bible has two clocks.*

*That might seem like a modern rationalization, if it were not for the fact that Talmudic commentaries 1500 years ago, brings this information. In the Midrash (Vayikra Rabba 29:1), an expansion of the Talmud, all the Sages agree that Rosh Hashana commemorates the soul of Adam, and that the Six Days of Genesis are separate.*

*Why were the Six Days taken out of the calendar? Because time is described differently*

in those Six Days of Genesis. "There was evening and morning" is an exotic, bizarre, unusual way of describing time.

Once you come from Adam, the flow of time is totally in human terms. Adam and Eve live 130 years before having children! Seth lives 105 years before having children, etc. From Adam forward, the flow of time is totally human in concept. But prior to that time, it's an abstract concept: "Evening and morning." It's as if you're looking down on events from a viewpoint that is not intimately related to them.



In trying to understand the flow of time here, you have to remember that the entire Six Days is described in 31 sentences. The Six Days of Genesis, which have given people so many headaches in trying to understand science vis-a-vis the Bible, are confined to 31 sentences! At MIT, in the Hayden library, we had about 50,000 books that deal with the development of the universe: cosmology, chemistry,

thermodynamics, paleontology, archaeology, the high-energy physics of creation. At Harvard, at the Weidner library, they probably have 200,000 books on these same topics. The Bible gives us 31 sentences. Don't expect that by a simple reading of those sentences you'll know every detail that is held within the text. It's obvious that we have to dig deeper to get the information out.

The idea of having to dig deeper is not a rationalization. The Talmud (Chagiga, ch. 2) tells us that from the opening sentence of the Bible, through the beginning of Chapter Two, the entire text is given in parable form, a poem with a text and a subtext. Now, again, put yourself into the mindset of 1500 years ago, the time of the Talmud. Why would the Talmud think it was parable? You think that 1500 years ago they thought that God couldn't make it all in 6 days? It was a problem for them? We have a problem today with cosmology and scientific data. But 1500 years ago, what's the problem with 6 days for an infinitely powerful God? No problem.

So when the Sages excluded these six days from the calendar, and said that the entire text is parable, it wasn't because they were trying to apologize away what they'd seen in the local museum. There was no local museum. The fact is that a close reading of the text makes it clear that there's information hidden and folded into layers below the surface.

There are early Jewish sources that tell us that the Bible's calendar is in two-parts (even predating Leviticus Rabba which goes back almost 1500 years and says it explicitly). In the closing speech that Moses makes to the people, he says if you want to see the fingerprint of God in the universe, "consider the days of old, the years of the many generations" (Deut. 32:7) Nachmanides, in the name of Kabbalah, says, "Why does Moses break the calendar into two parts — 'The days of old, and the years of the many generations?' Because, 'Consider the days of old' is the Six Days of Genesis. 'The years of

*the many generations' is all the time from Adam forward."*

*Moses says you can see God's fingerprint on the universe in one of two ways. Look at the phenomenon of the Six Days, and the development of life in the universe which is mind-boggling. Or if that doesn't impress you, then just consider society from Adam forward — the phenomenon of human history. Either way, you will find the imprint of God.*

*Let's jump back to the Six Days of Genesis. First of all, we now know that when the Biblical calendar says 5700-plus years, we must add to that "plus six days."*



*A few years ago, I acquired a dinosaur fossil that was dated (by two radioactive decay chains) as 150 million years old. My 7-year-old daughter says, "Abba! Dinosaurs? How can there be dinosaurs 150 million years ago, when my Bible teacher says the world isn't even 6000 years old?" So I told her to look in Psalms 90:4. There, you'll find something quite amazing. King David says, "One thousand years in Your (God's) sight are like a day that passes, a watch in the night." Perhaps time is different from the perspective of King David, than it is from the perspective of the Creator. Perhaps time is different.*



*Another example is Genesis 1:5, which says, "There is evening and morning, Day One." That is the first time that a day is quantified: evening and morning. Nachmanides discusses the meaning of evening and morning. Does it mean sunset and sunrise? It would certainly seem to.*

*But Nachmanides points out a problem with that. The text says "there was evening and morning Day One... evening and morning a second day... evening and morning a third day." Then on the fourth day, the sun is mentioned. Nachmanides says that any intelligent reader can see an obvious problem. How do we have a concept of evening and morning for the first three days if the sun is only mentioned on Day Four? There is a purpose for the sun appearing only on Day Four, so that as time goes by and people understand more about the universe, you can dig deeper into the text.*

*Nachmanides says the text uses the words "Vayehi Erev" — but it doesn't mean "there was evening." He explains that the Hebrew letters Ayin, Resh, Bet — the root of "erev" — is chaos. Mixture, disorder. That's why evening is called "erev", because when the sun goes down, vision becomes blurry. The literal meaning is "there was disorder." The Torah's word for "morning" — "boker" — is the absolute opposite. When the sun rises, the world becomes "bikoret", orderly, able to be discerned. That's why the sun needn't be mentioned until Day Four. Because from erev to boker is a flow from disorder to order, from chaos to cosmos. That's something any scientist will testify never happens in an unguided system. Order never arises from disorder spontaneously and remains orderly. Order*

*always degrades to chaos unless the environment recognizes the order and locks it in to preserve it. There must be a guide to the system. That's an unequivocal statement.*

There is much more to the article, including how Einstein's view of relativity and time impact the discussion. For more, go to [aish.com](http://aish.com).

## Gefilte Fish

We all have our family traditions surrounding Jewish holidays. One of my family traditions was that we started our meal with gefilte fish, followed by matzoh ball soup, and a main course featuring roasted chicken.

So what exactly is gefilte fish?

Well what it is NOT is a fish you can fish for in the river, or a mountain stream, or a lake. Nor can you go deep sea fishing and hope to snag a gefilte fish.

My bubbe used to make home-made gefilte fish, and my mother used to buy it in a jar. Later on, I discovered that some people prepared it in a loaf.

But, still, what is it?

Alison Siegel, writing for the Huffington post, said, *"Made up of ground, deboned white fish that has been formed into fish balls or patties, gefilte fish may not sound like the most appetizing dish. Depending on who's making it, it can be white-verging-on-grey or firm-verging-on-gummy. If you can get past appearances and stereotypes, however, gefilte fish can actually be quite good. Of course, some people will never get past the jelly in the jarred stuff. Hence gefilte fish's place in the latest installment of our series "Good Or Gross," in which we debate the merits of polarizing foods like uni and peanut butter and pickle sandwiches.*

*When made at home, gefilte fish can be delicious. Yes, we said delicious. Depending on*

*the recipe, the consistency can vary from chunky to smooth, but no matter what, you won't find the notorious jar goo. Good gefilte fish will have a consistency similar to a light matzo ball. When you make it from scratch, you can also make it slightly sweet by adding some sugar (in the Polish tradition), or you can choose to make it on the saltier side.*



*On the other hand, you might be partial to the jarred stuff! If you are, godspeed. We're not sure we agree with you, but we believe everyone is entitled to his or her own opinion. As HuffPost Staff Writer for Family and Relationships Rebecca Adams puts it, "I personally don't eat it canned, but I know plenty of people who don't gag at the sight of fish gel."*

Could there be a religious side to gefilte fish, too?

Here is what [chabad.org](http://chabad.org) says about gefilte fish:

*Before discussing gefilte fish, let's first take a moment to discuss why it is customary to eat fish on Shabbat. Here are a few of the reasons given:*

- 1. In the Torah's account of the creation of the world, the word "blessing" is used three times. The first is regarding the creation of fish, the second regarding the creation of man, and the third regarding Shabbat. When a human eats fish on*

*Shabbat, he is thus the beneficiary of a triple blessing.*

- 2. Each letter in the Hebrew alphabet has a gematria (numerical value). The letters of the Hebrew word for fish, dag, add up to seven. We therefore honor Shabbat, the seventh day of the week, by eating fish.*
- 3. At the time of the messianic redemption, there will be a feast at which the Leviathan, a giant fish, will be served. Shabbat, the day of rest, is a microcosm of the messianic era. As such, the fish we eat on Shabbat is in anticipation of the “day which will be a complete and perfect Shabbat.”*
- 4. Perhaps most importantly: eating fish is an integral part of oneg Shabbat—the obligation to enjoy and engage in pleasurable pursuits on Shabbat.*

*Now, to answer your question about gefilte fish:*

*In Yiddish, gefilte fish means “stuffed fish.” Originally, the recipe for gefilte fish called for the flesh of the fish to be removed from the skin, ground up and mixed with other ingredients such as eggs, spices, and ground onions and carrots. The mixture was then stuffed back into the skin, and cooked or baked. The laws of Shabbat prohibit removing bones from fish, making fish consumption a bit tricky. Boneless gefilte fish circumvents this problem. In addition, including all the additional ingredients in the ground fish stretched the amount, so that poor families would have enough for the entire household.*

*Nowadays, the gefilte fish mixture is usually not stuffed back into the skin, but the name remains. Gefilte fish can be bought ready-to-eat in jars, in frozen rolls—or you can prepare your own.*

Want to try making your own homemade gefilte fish? Here is a recipe from [jewishrecipes.org](http://jewishrecipes.org):

#### Recipe Ingredients:

- 2lbs Fish Fillets [pike, carp and white fish]
- 4 medium onions
- 4 tsp salt
- 1 tsp pepper
- 1 qt water
- 3 eggs
- 1/4 cup of cold ice water
- 3 tbsp matzo meal
- 3 carrots sliced

Remove the head, skin and bones from the fish. Place these trimmings, 3 onions, 2 tsp, salt and pepper into the quart of water. Simmer about 2 minutes. Grind the fish fillets with the remaining onion. Place in a chopping bowl, add the eggs, ice water, matzo meal and remaining seasonings. Chop mixture until very fine and thoroughly blended. Moisten hands and shape mixture into balls

Drop balls into the boiling stock and add carrots. Cover and simmer for 1 1/2 hours. If the stock cooks down too much, add a little water. Cool the fish slightly, and serve with horseradish.

Makes 12 Servings

Or you can do it the easy way:



# Dues And Donations



At the Carnegie Shul we try to make religion affordable for all. Dues are very low and there is no charge for High Holy Days tickets. But, just like everyone else, we do have bills to pay such as utilities and building maintenance.

Tzedukah is an important part of our Yom Kippur tradition. As we are taught, teshuvah, tefillah and tzedakah will avert the stern decree.

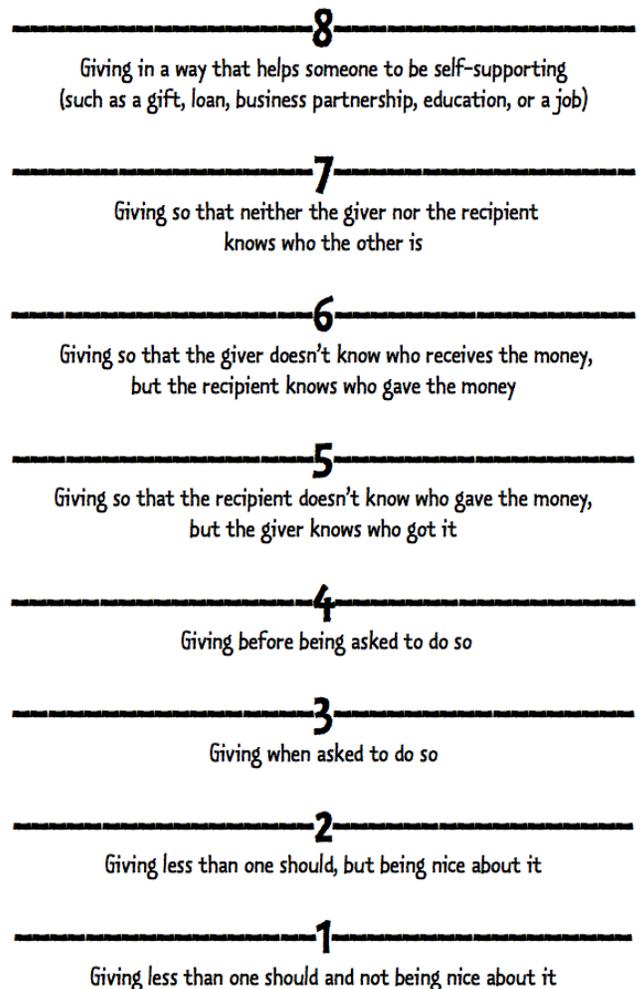
And so, on this Yom Kippur, we ask that you consider a donation to the Carnegie Shul as part of your Yom Kippur tzedukah. Donation cards and envelopes will be available in the shul, or you may mail your dues and donations to our treasurer, Joel Roteman, at 954 Lindendale Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15243.

## Eight Degrees of Charity

Why do you give to charity? Is it to help someone in need? Is it to “get you off the hook” for when you screw up? Do you do it so everyone will think you are a good guy?

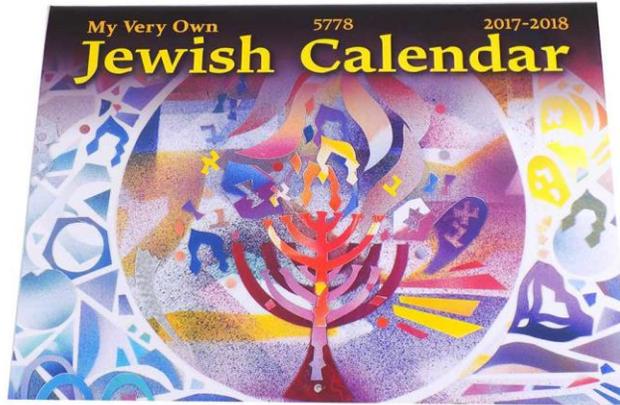
Giving to charity is always a good thing to do, but there are some levels of giving that our sages tell us are better than others.

This chart depicts the eight levels of charity according to Maimonides. Where do you fit in?



Did you call this space the “pushke” when you played monopoly as a kid? In Yiddish, a pushke is a box in the home or the synagogue used to collect money for donation to the poor.

When we played Monopoly, whoever landed on Free Parking received all of the money that had been paid by those who landed on Community Chest or Chance. Did you have a Monopoly pushke?



## Holiday Schedule 5778 / 2017

### Rosh Hashanah

**Wednesday, September 20**

Evening service..... 7:15 pm

**Thursday, September 21**

Preliminary Service .....8:30 am

Shacharis .....9:00 am

Torah Reading .....10:00 am

Sermon .....10:45 am

Musaf .....11:15 am

Recess..... 1:15 pm

Tashlich ..... 6:15 pm

Minchah ..... 7:00 pm

Maariv ..... 7:15 pm

**Friday, September 22**

Preliminary Service .....8:30 am

Shacharis .....9:00 am

Torah Reading .....10:00 am

Sermon .....10:45 am

Musaf .....11:15 am



### Shabbos

**Saturday, September 23**

Preliminary Service ..... 9:20 am



## Yom Kippur

**Friday, September 29**

Kol Nidre ..... 7:00 pm  
Maariv ..... 7:45 pm

**Saturday, September 30**

Preliminary Service .....9:00 am  
Shacharis .....9:30 am  
Torah Reading .....10:30 am  
Sermon .....11:15 am  
Yizkor .....11:45 am  
Musaf ..... 12:15 pm  
Recess ..... 2:30 pm  
Minchah ..... 5:45 pm  
Neilah ..... 6:45 pm  
Shofar ..... 7:45 pm



## Sukkos

**Thursday, October 5**

Morning Service .....9:20 am

**Friday, October 6**

Morning Service ..... 9:20 am

## Shabbos

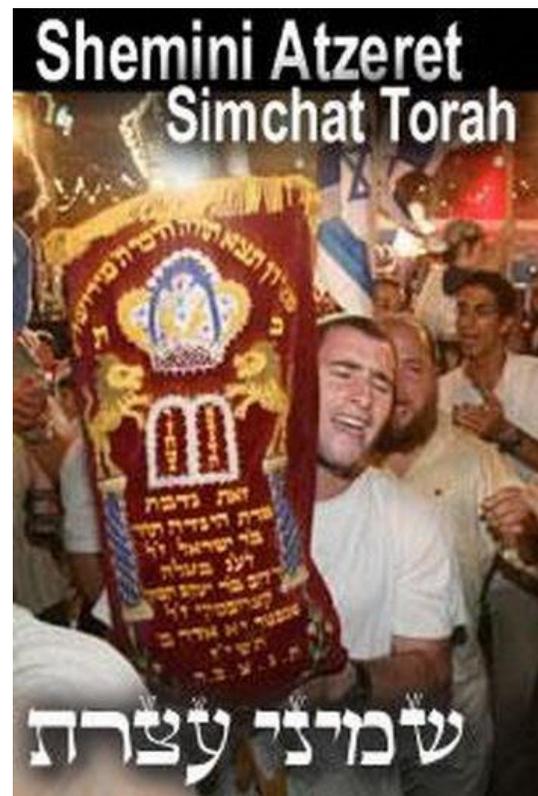
**Saturday, October 7**

Preliminary Service ..... 9:20 am

## Shemini Atzeres

**Thursday, October 12**

Morning Service ..... 9:20 am  
Yizkor ..... 11:00 am  
Musaf ..... 11:40 am



## Simchas Torah

**Friday, October 13**

Morning Service ..... 9:20 am

## Shabbos

**Saturday, October 14**

Preliminary Service ..... 9:20 am