



PRAYERS and RITUALS

Aleinu: “It is our obligation” A prayer of praise and dedication, Aleinu affirms the relationship between God and the Jewish people.

Aliyah: “To go up” The honor of being called to the bimah to recite the blessings before and after a Torah reading.

Avinu Malkeinu: “Our Parent, Our Sovereign” A prayer asking to experience grace, acknowledging that the blessings in our lives are not rewards for our deeds.

G’lilah: Dressing of the Torah scroll after the reading.

Haftarah: From the Hebrew for “conclude” or “complete,” a selection from the Prophets or Writings that shares a theme with the week’s Torah portion.

Hagbah: Raising and displaying the text of the open Torah scroll to the congregation echoes the experience at Sinai when tradition says Torah was first given to us.

Hakafah: From the Hebrew word for “circle,” carrying the Torah scroll around the sanctuary in procession, symbolic of Torah’s belonging to the whole community.

Havdalah: “Separation” The Havdalah ritual ends Yom Kippur and each Shabbat by engaging our five senses: seeing the flame of the braided candle, feeling its warmth, smelling sweet spices, tasting wine, and hearing blessings, as the sacred time comes to a close.

Kaddish: A prayer, written in Aramaic, that concludes the daily, Shabbat, and Yizkor liturgy. The words of Kaddish are meant to help us look beyond ourselves for meaning and support. Kaddish ends with our prayer for peace and wholeness “Oseh shalom...”

Kiddush: “Sanctification” The blessing recited over wine affirms the sacred nature of the day.

Kol Nidre: “All Vows” This prayer ushers in Yom Kippur. We ask to be excused from vows made to God but not fulfilled.

L’Shanah Tovah Tikatevu: “May you be inscribed [in the Book of Life] for a good year.” This is a traditional greeting among Jews on Rosh Hashanah. From Rosh Hashanah through Yom Kippur, the greeting **Chatimah Tovah** “May the seal [in the Book of Life] be a good one” is also used.

N’ilah: “Closing” or “Locking” This final Yom Kippur prayer service concludes the Ten Days of Awe (the High Holy Day period), and ends with the Tekiah G’dolah, the longest blast of the shofar.

Rosh Hashanah: “Head of the Year” Rosh Hashanah begins the Ten Days of Awe, the period of self-examination, charity, and resolution to do better in the new year.

Shofar: Tradition tells us that a ram’s horn was sounded at Mount Sinai when the Jewish people received Torah. The shofar sounds are announced by name: Tekiah; Teruah; Shevarim; and finally, Tekiah G’dolah, the longest shofar blast.

S’lichot: “Forgiveness” A service held on a Saturday evening preceding Rosh Hashanah, offering a spiritual gateway into the High Holy Day period. At East End Temple, S’lichot is an opportunity for music, study, dressing our Torah scrolls in their white High Holy Day covers, perhaps wearing white clothing ourselves, and hearing the shofar.

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Simchat Torah: “Rejoicing in Torah” Observed at the end of Sukkot, Simchat Torah marks the conclusion of the annual cycle of weekly Torah portions. We chant the last verses of the book of Deuteronomy, and then roll a Torah scroll back to the beginning so we can start again with the book of Genesis. Following EET’s tradition, we then carry our scrolls outside or to the social hall for joyful singing and dancing.

Sukkot: One of our three pilgrimage festivals (along with Pesach and Shavuot), Sukkot began as the festival of giving thanks for the harvest and is also associated with the temporary dwellings (sukkot) used by the Israelites during their forty-year journey to the Promised Land. Two of the mitzvot associated with the holiday are shaking the lulav and etrog, and having meals with friends in the sukkah. Sukkot begins five days after Yom Kippur.

Tashlich: “To throw” Between Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur we gather at a body of flowing water and symbolically throw away the sins of the past year.

Teshuvah: “Return” to doing what is right. One understanding of the concept of sin is that we fall short of our best selves. Teshuvah requires that we acknowledge what we have done wrong, take responsibility for it, repair the damage if we can, and take steps so it will not happen again.

Yahrtzeit: The Yiddish word referring to the anniversary of the date a person died. It is customary to light a memorial candle on the evenings preceding Yahrtzeit and Yizkor dates, and to attend services to say Kaddish.

Yizkor: “May [God] remember” A service of memorial psalms and prayers, Yizkor is offered on Yom Kippur and during the festivals of Sukkot, Pesach, and Shavuot.

Yom Kippur: Customs for the “Day of Atonement” include fasting, charitable acts, and introspection. Some may include the traditions of wearing white clothing and foregoing leather shoes.

