

WELCOME TO CONGREGATION KOL SHOFAR

A FRIENDLY GUIDE TO OUR SHABBAT SERVICE



Congregation Kol Shofar
215 Blackfield Drive
Tiburon
415.388.1818 / www.kolshofar.org



WELCOME!

We are happy that you have joined us today! We hope this booklet will be a helpful orientation to our Shabbat services, especially for those of you who may be unfamiliar with Jewish worship. Please feel that you're among friends. Don't hesitate to introduce yourself or to ask questions. We want you to feel welcome and comfortable. First of all, we want to orient you to the three different books that we use on Shabbat mornings at Kol Shofar:

Siddur Sim Shalom for Shabbat and Festivals

This is the blue prayerbook which contains the Hebrew prayers, as well as English translations of the prayers.

Siddur Eit Ratzon

This is the mauve colored prayerbook. It contains not only the Hebrew prayers and English translation, but also a full transliteration of the Hebrew and explanations of the service. This prayerbook is recommended for those who don't know Hebrew or who would like a better understanding of the service. The page numbers that correspond to the blue *Siddur Sim Shalom* can be found on the inside cover in this prayerbook. Please ask a welcomer, stationed at the entrance of the sanctuary, for one of our transliterated prayerbooks.

Etz Hayim

This large red volume is called a *Chumash*, which is the Five Books of Moses, plus commentary. We use this to follow along with *Torah* and *haftarah* readings.

You may also participate by... meditating, thinking, offering your own personal prayers, or simply allowing the joy of the singing and the feeling of community to enter your spirit. After all, the main purpose of prayer is to draw closer to the presence of God. Don't worry about being in step with every detail of the service. With time, you'll become more and more familiar with our prayers, melodies, and customs. We also offer many opportunities to learn more, so please check our website for a full schedule of classes and programs: www.kolshofar.org.

ABOUT OUR BEIT KNESSET (SANCTUARY)

You are seated in our new sanctuary designed by Bob Herman & Susie Coliver and dedicated in the Summer of 2010. Our sanctuary embodies the Jewish value of *Hiddur Mitzvah*, the notion that our faith be physically presented to reflect the inner beauty of Judaism.

Central to Judaism is our sense of the Divine that permeates every aspect of our lives. This unique concept is captured in a verse from Isaiah 40: "Holy, Holy, Holy is Adonai of heavenly hosts, the entire world is filled with God's presence." The asymmetrical design of the sanctuary space, with its high vaulted ceiling, expresses the transcendence of God, while the circular seating allows congregants to see each other as they pray and represents God's closeness.

We are also symbolically surrounded by our ancestors. On the north wall you may notice some glowing lights. The names of the deceased ancestors of our families are inscribed on that wall. On the anniversary of a relative's death, the memorial light is illuminated and their living relatives recite *Kaddish*, or mourner's prayer, in the person's memory. Along the south side of the sanctuary you will see seven columns, each represents one of our earliest ancestors, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Sarah, Rebecca, Leah and Rachel.

Along the dome of the sanctuary you will notice seven skylights. The six oblong skylights represent the six days of creation, while the seventh circular one represents the Sabbath, the completion of God's creating. Suspended from that circular skylight is a rather unique representation of the *Ner Tamid* (eternal light), which burned in the temple of old in Jerusalem. This *Ner Tamid* does not shed light, but reflects and scatters the rays of the sun in the day and the light of the synagogue at night. This *Ner Tamid* is an artistic rendition of a *Kabbalistic* (mystical) *midrash* (story): Shortly after God created a world that was "very good," that perfection was shattered and divine shards were scattered throughout the world. Because we are partners in God's creation and are made in God's image, it becomes our human and Jewish task to practice *Tikkun*

Olam (the repair of the world) and restore the world to its intended state of peace and wholeness.

At the front of the sanctuary is the *Aron Hakodesh*, (the holy ark) which contains the *Torah* (the five books of Moses) scrolls. Traditionally, the ark is covered by a *parochet* (curtain). Here, multiple curtains made of textile panels surround the ark. Because it is fabric, it moves and glimmers in different shades at various times of the day. For us, the *Torah* is not a fixed document, a closed book, but is like a jewel with many different facets, offering many perspectives and simultaneous levels of meaning.

The doors of the ark are rendered in sandblasted glass and are an exact representation of an eighteenth century European *parochet* made of velvet embroidered with metallic and silk threads by Jacob Gans in 1772-73. The original resides in the Jewish Museum in New York. This reinterpretation in our synagogue connects our congregation to its largely Ashkenazic (European) roots.

At the center of the sanctuary is the *Bimah* (podium), on which the *Torah* will be placed after it is removed from the ark. *Torah*, which means teaching, is the focal point of Judaism. The *Torah* is opened, read and studied in the midst of the community. All are teachers and learners of its eternal message.

As you leave the synagogue, be sure to notice the plaque on the pillar to your left as you reach the main doors. It is dedicated to the many artisans who labored to physically build this sanctuary. We honor the dedication and love they poured into every detail of this house of God.

ABOUT THE JEWISH PRAYER SERVICE

The Jewish prayer experience is an intentional structure for both communal expression and personal exploration and evaluation. Our prayer book is called a *siddur* (set order) and contains a clearly structured order of prayers for the individual and community. This set order represents the central affirmations of Judaism as understood by our rabbis and people over the centuries.

In Judaism, prayer is an invitation to think about and examine our understanding of these ideas both as a community and as individuals. The Hebrew word for prayer is “*Li’hitpalel*” (self-examination or self-evaluation). As we engage with the central tenets of Judaism, we are invited to meditate upon our own individual relationship to God and our responsibilities as human beings. In this sense prayer moves us beyond the “set order” to seek the heart and soul in each of us.

THE ORDER OF THE SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE

There are three main sections of the Shabbat Service: *Shaharit* (the Morning Service), the *Torah* Service, and *Musaf* (the Additional Service). An explanation of these three parts, as well as major components of each part follows. Page numbers correspond to *Siddur Sim Shalom*, the blue prayerbook.

Page 65: Birkhot HaShahar (The Preliminary Service)

The service begins with a series of blessings through which we express our thanks for some of the most commonplace aspects of our lives. We express our thanks for the daily miracles which enable us to rise in the morning, open our eyes, and go about our daily tasks. We also add prayers of gratitude for the wisdom and teachings of the *Torah* and our sages.

Page 83: Pesukei Dezimra (Introductory Hymns)

This section is a selection of scriptural readings derived from the *Torah*, Prophetic Writings, Psalms and other biblical books, which praise God’s name and speak of God’s sovereignty in the world. These readings set a tone of awe and reverence and prepare us for the morning’s prayer service. We sing many of these selections to express our joy and gratitude for God’s creation of the world.

Page 107: Shaharit (The Morning Service)

The formal morning service officially begins with the *Barkhu*, or “call to prayer” and is followed by a communal response. Following this, we offer praises to God for the creation of light and the daily miracles of creation. We also thank God for the love shown to the Jewish people through the gift of the wisdom of the Torah and its commandments.

Page 112: The Shema

“Hear O Israel, Adonai is our God, Adonai is One”

This passage from the Book of Deuteronomy, along with the three passages which follow, is a central part of each morning and evening Jewish prayer service. Probably the most important single sentence in the liturgy, the *Shema* is not a prayer but rather an affirmation of the unity of God. This assertion of divine unity entails a Jewish belief in the unity of humanity and the fellowship of all human beings. Because we are all the creation of one God, we are all responsible for the welfare of one another. It is customary during the *Shema* to cover one’s eyes in order to fully concentrate on God’s oneness.

Page 115b: The Amidah (Standing Prayer)

The *Amidah* is a series of *brakhot* (blessings) recited while standing in silent meditation. It is the major liturgical piece of every regular synagogue service throughout the year. On a weekday, the *Amidah* contains prayers for the physical and spiritual well-being of the one praying as well as the entire community of the people of Israel, while on *Shabbat* we praise God for the joy of the *Shabbat* and the rest that we enjoy. The *Amidah* begins with prayers of praise and concludes with prayers of thanksgiving. We encourage worshippers to say not only the printed words but also their own personal prayers coming from the heart.

Page 139: The Torah Service

After the conclusion of the *Shema* and the *Amidah*, the transition is made from prayer to study. Each of the *Torah* scrolls in the ark contains the full text of the Pentateuch, (the Five Books of Moses).

A Torah scroll is written on parchment by a specially trained scribe. The calligraphy used to write these scrolls has been the same for over 2,000 years. The text of the *Torah* contains no vocalization or punctuation, and it is chanted according to a prescribed musical melody and pattern which has existed for over a millennium. You may follow the reading in an English translation entitled, *Etz Hayim Torah & Commentary* (the large red books).

The *Torah* is divided into and read in weekly portions according to a prescribed calendar so that the entire *Torah* is read in the span of one year. At Kol Shofar, we follow a triennial *Torah* reading, which means that we read one third of each portion each week, completing the reading of the *Torah* every three years.

The *Torah* scrolls are dressed in a fashion recalling the priestly garb of ancient Temple times, i.e., robe, crowns and belt. We show our love and reverence for the *Torah* by carrying it through the congregation accompanied by song. It is customary to “kiss” the *Torah* by touching the *Torah* and then one’s lips with the *tallit* (prayer shawl) or *siddur* (prayerbook).

Page 142: Aliyot (Being called up to the Torah)

On *Shabbat*, the weekly *Torah* portion is read in seven divisions. The divisions of the readings provide opportunities to honor members of the congregation and guests by calling them up to the *Bimah* (podium) to recite the blessings over the *Torah* reading. This is known as receiving an *aliyah*, (being called up to the *Torah*). At the conclusion of the reading of the *Torah*, two people are called to lift up and wrap the *Torah* scroll. The purpose of lifting the *Torah* scroll is to display it to the congregation in order to show that the *Torah* is an open book and belongs to all the people. As the *Torah* is lifted, the congregation rises and chants in Hebrew, “This is the *Torah* that Moses placed before the children of Israel at the command of God.”

Page 146: The Maftir and Haftarah

The eighth and final *aliyah* is called *Maftir* (one who concludes). It is usually a repetition of part of the last division of the *Torah* portion which was just read, and serves as a bridge to the *Haftarah*. Once the *Torah* scroll has been removed from the reading table, the *Maftir* chants a portion from the Prophetic writings of the Hebrew bible. The *Haftarah*, (concluding teaching) is usually chosen to reflect a theme or literary allusion in the *Torah* portion. The purpose of the *Haftarah* is not only to provide an opportunity to teach from a different section of the bible, but also to assert that prophecy serves to reinforce the laws of the *Torah*.

The Drash

After the *Torah* and *Haftarah* are read, the rabbi or a lay leader will deliver a *drash* or an interpretive teaching about the morning's readings. At Kol Shofar, the *drash* will often include a question that will open a discussion during the service. This unique custom expresses our belief in the importance of asking questions and in the power of multi-layered meanings and differing interpretations of our sacred texts.

Page 155: Musaf (The Additional Service)

Musaf is the additional service recited on all Sabbaths and Festivals. The name *musaf* originally applied to the additional animal sacrifice that was offered on special occasions in Jerusalem in ancient times at the Temple. When the Temple was destroyed by Rome in 70 C.E. and sacrifices could no longer be offered, the sacrificial system was transformed by the ancient rabbis into a system of prayers, and the institution of the ancient Temple was replaced by the synagogue.

Page 183: Aleinu

This prayer, recited while standing, is an affirmation of our belief in God's sovereignty over the universe. In it, we renounce idolatry and thank God for the uniqueness of the Jewish people. The heart of this prayer is the statement of our commitment to the "repair of the world under God's rule." We remind ourselves of the core Jewish value of *Tikkun Olam*, or repairing the world. We also state that we look forward to the day when all of humanity will be united in worship of God.

Page 184: Mourner's Kaddish

Although there is no mention of death in this prayer, the *Kaddish* is recited by family members who have suffered the loss of a loved one in the past year or on the anniversary of a death. Despite sorrow and pain, the mourner rises to declare continuing commitment in praising God's name, to which we all respond, "Amen".

Kiddush (Sanctification of the wine)

The service concludes with the hymn, *Adon Olam* (Lord of the World) and is followed immediately in the *Beit Am* (social hall) by *Kiddush*, (blessing over the wine). Together, we sing the Hebrew verses from Exodus 31:16-17 acknowledging the *Shabbat* as a sign of the covenant between the Jewish people and God. Everyone is invited to ritually wash their hands before reciting *Ha'Motzi*, the blessing over the bread. It is a custom not to speak after washing until eating, and so the community joins together in humming Jewish melodies during this brief interval. Everyone is invited to stay and enjoy a light lunch. During lunch, we continue to wear *kipot*, ritual head coverings, and to refrain from using electronic devices such as cell phones and cameras.

CUSTOMS OF THE SYNAGOGUE

The Kippah or Yarmulke (Head Covering)

The skull cap (*kippah* or *yarmulke*) is an expression of humility, respect, and awareness of God's presence worn by Jews when they pray, study or eat. Any male, Jew or gentile, entering the sanctuary at any time, should wear a *kippah*. There are different customs observed by women regarding head coverings; however, we ask that all men and women who ascend to the *Bimah* (podium) wear a *kippah* and a *tallit* (prayer shawl). We also request that males keep their heads covered at all times when they are in the synagogue and during the *Kiddush* luncheon.

The Tallit (Prayer Shawl)

The fringed garment that is worn by both men and women on *Shabbat* mornings is commanded in the fifteenth chapter of the Book of Numbers: “Bid them make fringes on the four corners of their garments throughout their generations.” The purpose of the prayer shawl is to serve as a reminder of the commandments which are symbolized by the knots in the corner fringes. We ask that all men and women who ascend to the *Bimah* (podium) for a *Torah* honor wear a *kippah* and a *tallit*.

Shabbat Observances

Shabbat (Friday night at sundown to the appearance of three stars on Saturday night) is a day of communal prayer, study, and celebration. In order to protect its spirit and sanctity, we observe some prohibitions. These prohibitions include smoking, writing, taking pictures, using phones, and using money. We ask you to please respect the sanctity of the *Shabbat* and abide by these prohibitions while in the synagogue or on its grounds.

The Minyan (Quorum)

In order to hold a public prayer service, a *minyan* (quorum) of ten adult Jews above the age of thirteen is required. In the absence of a *minyan*, it is not possible to recite the *Kaddish*, the *Barkhu*, the *Kedushah* or read from the *Torah*. Ten is the customary number assigned by the Jewish tradition as a minimum representation of the community.

Seating

Seating is open, so please sit anywhere you are comfortable.

Children

Children are a beloved part of our community and are welcome in our services. We also offer a play area and a family room, both of which can be found in the back of the sanctuary.

PARTICIPANTS IN THE SERVICE

The Rabbi

“Rabbi” means teacher. The major function of a rabbi is to instruct and guide in the study and practice of Judaism. A rabbi’s authority is based solely on learning.

The Shaliah Tzibbur (Emissary of the Congregation)

The *Shaliah Tzibbur* is the leader of congregational prayers. Every Jewish prayer service, whether on a weekday, *Shabbat* or festival, is chanted in a special musical mode and pattern. The *Shaliah Tzibbur* must be skilled in these traditional musical modes and familiar with the prayers. Any member of the congregation, above the age of *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* (thirteen years old) who is familiar with the prayers and melodies may serve as a *Shaliah Tzibbur*.

The Gabbai

The *Gabbai*, or sexton, attends to the details of organizing the worship service. The *Gabbai* (*Gabbaim*, plural) arranges who will serve as the *Shaliah Tzibbur*, receive *aliyot* and ensures that the Torah is read correctly.

Participatory Community of Worshipers

Any knowledgeable Jew is permitted and encouraged to lead the prayers, receive an *aliyah*, read from the *Torah* and chant the *Haftarah*.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah

At thirteen, a young Jewish man or woman becomes obligated to observe the commandments of Judaism. “*Bar*” or “*Bat*” *Mitzvah* means son or daughter of the commandments. The celebration of a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* signifies that the young man or woman is beginning and will continue to function as an active and responsible Jew in the synagogue and the Jewish community.

ABOUT CONGREGATION KOL SHOFAR

Congregation Kol Shofar is a vibrant, highly participatory, egalitarian Jewish synagogue that supports each individual and family in their exploration of Jewish tradition and search for Jewish meaning. The congregation has been part of the community for 50 years and is affiliated with the Conservative movement. Along with Friday night and Saturday services, the congregation provides religious school, early childhood programs, youth programs, a wide variety of adult education including music and literature, prayer and religious instruction and social events. The Southern Marin Jewish Community Preschool is housed on the campus, and our congregation works to improve the lives of others in our broader community through representation on the Marin Interfaith Council and the Marin Organizing Committee. The congregation also owns the Kol Shalom cemetery housed at Mount Tamalpais Cemetery in San Rafael.

Please visit our website at www.kolshofar.org.

For more information or questions
please feel free to contact:

Rabbi Chai Levy:

clevy@kolshofar.org or 415.388.1818 ext 100

Nancy Drapin, Executive Director:

ndrapin@kolshofar.org or 415.388.1818 ext 103

Congregation Kol Shofar
215 Blackfield Drive
Tiburon, CA
415.388.1818 / www.kolshofar.org

