

Kol Haskalah: A Humanistic Jewish Congregation Shabbat Celebration

Welcome

Song: Henay Ma Tov

*He-nay ma tov u-ma na-im, Sheh-vet a-khim gam ya-khad
He-nay ma tov u-ma na-im, Sheh-vet a-khim gam ya-khad.*

Leader: Behold how good and pleasant it is for us to come together in unity and peace.

All: Although there is cruelty and injustice, we must bring compassion and harmony.

Leader: Although there is intolerance, we must work toward peace, acceptance and understanding.

All: Although there is prejudice, we must work toward cooperation and compromise.

Leader: We must strive toward dignity for all. We dream of peace. We must move toward peace.

All: We must not lose our dream. We must not give up our striving.

(Adapted from Rabbi Tamara Kolton)

Sabbath greetings, Sabbath peace

Reader: We gather, as Jews have always gathered, to create precious Sabbath moments. Let us take pause from our everyday lives to create a special time, a Sabbath time.

All: Let us put aside the fear, anger, turmoil, trials, dissonance, demands, expectations and pace of our daily existence that we may create and celebrate the Sabbath.

Reader: Let the possibilities of this moment be not lost. Let every potential for wisdom, harmony and elation be realized.

All: Let the Sabbath be an expression of the best in us and all that we can share.

Reader: The Sabbath is a time for peace, for contemplation, for introspection, for understanding and for hope. It is a time for love, laughter and joy to be shared by family and friends.

All: For giving and getting. For sharing and caring.

Reader: For learning about the goodness of life, for reaffirming our faith and our beliefs.

All: For having the courage to express the best within us.

Reader: So let us grasp these Sabbath moments. Let us savor them. Let us cherish them.

All: Let passion for life be kindled within our souls as we light the Sabbath tapers.

Reader: The Sabbath reminds us that even more important than the right to work is the right not to work.

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Reader: The Sabbath reminds us that our bodies belong to us, not to our employers, and that physical, intellectual and emotional pleasures are to be enjoyed.

Reader: The Sabbath reminds us that we need roses as well as bread, that our families, friends and our life of the mind has a necessary place in our lives.

Reader: The Sabbath is more than a reminder that we are free, it is a reminder that we are human.

Lighting the Candles

Leader: Lighting candles is a natural affirmation of life and hope. For thousands of years Jews have lit Shabbat candles.

All: The warm glow of the candles is a reflection of the light within us and of the love and friendship we have for each other.

Reader: On this day we would see the world in a new light. On this day we would add new spirit to our lives.

All: We light these candles to celebrate our coming together.
They reflect the light in our lives and the warmth we find in our community.
They connect us to our many traditions and to all humanity.

Reader: In our unshakable conviction that human happiness and dignity are the most important goals of life, we have sought and found a Jewish path along which to walk as humanists.

All: It is Humanistic Judaism.

Reader: Our ancestors, in their time, adapted the beliefs and customs of their neighbors and in each age recreated and reshaped Judaism. As Humanistic Jews, we believe that human beings have the power to solve human problems.

All: This is our mitzvah, our obligation. We embrace reason and human imagination. We love Jewish culture and recognize that other peoples love theirs equally.

Reader: These values have become part of our Jewish being. Our Jewishness is strengthened when our thought, our world view and the expression of Jewishness in our lives are all in harmony.

All: Let us light the Shabbat candles and reaffirm the humanistic Jewish values that guide our lives.

Light Candles

All: May our time together bring us joy and a renewed sense of commitment to our friends and loved ones, and to all humanity.

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*Na'eh haor ba'olam
Na'eh haor b'adam
Na'eh haor ba'shalom, ba'shalom,
Na'eh haor, ha'eh haor, b'shabbat.*

How good is the light of the world.
How good is the light within humanity.
How wonderful is the light of peace, the light of peace.
How wonderful, how wonderful, are the lights of Shabbat.

Reader: As these Shabbat candles give light to all who behold them, so may we, by our lives, give light to all who behold us.

Reader: As their brightness reminds us of all that can be bright in our lives, so may we, by our actions, make the world a brighter and warmer place for all.

Song: Shalom Aleykhem
("We bring peace to you")

Sharing the Wine

Leader: Wine is the universal symbol of joy and the sweetness of life. And, like the lighting of candles, the blessing of wine is an affirmation of life.

*All: Barukh Haarets Hashemesh, Hashemesh,
V'hageshem Boray P'ri Hagafen*

Radiant is the earth, and the sun, and the rain
That brings forth the fruit, the fruit of the vine.

Reader: We raise our cups in appreciation of the world and its many gifts.

Reader: In the spirit of understanding, freedom, remembrance and fellowship, we share this wine.

Reader: In the spirit of connectedness, respect, compassion and love, we drink this wine.

Reader: May the sweetness of this time always be with those who join to create the sweetness of the Sabbath.

All: (Drink the wine) *L'Chaim*. To life. *L'shalom*. To Peace.

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Sharing the Challah

Leader: Breaking bread together is another custom that is almost as old as the human race. It is the way people celebrate the miracle that they themselves created: the miracle that turns grain into a wonderful food. The twisted Shabbat bread is called challah because that was the name of the bread that every Jew had to bring to the great Temple in Jerusalem in biblical times. As Humanistic Jews, we see the intertwined fingers of the challah representing our wish to join hands with brothers and sisters throughout the world.

Reader: In breaking this bread together we express our appreciation of the earth, which provides for us and of all those who work respectfully with the products of the earth: the farmers who plant and grow the grain, the millers who grind it into flour and the bakers who turn the flour into bread.

Reader: May the sharing of this challah strengthen our bonds with others who walk upon this earth.

All: *B'ruchim hamotsiim lekhem meen ha-a-retz.*
Blessed are those who bring forth bread from the earth.

Niskor

Leader: Let us remember. As a community, let us rise and remember loved ones whose life and whose death have impacted our lives. Let us pause for a moment of personal reflection. [silent reflection 30 seconds]

All: *Yit-ga-dal v'-yit-ka-dash et zich-ram l'-o-lam*
Let their memory be revered forever.

Ze-cher tza-di-kim liv-ra-kha
May the memory of the righteous be a blessing to us.

Leader: In the rising of the sun and in its going down, we remember them.

All: In the blowing of the wind and in the chill of the winter, we remember them.

Leader: In the opening of the buds and in the rebirth of spring,, we remember them.

All: In the blueness of the sky and the warmth of summer, we remember them.

Leader: In the rustling of the leaves and in the beauty of autumn, we remember them.

All: When we are weary and in need of strength, we remember them.

Leader: When we are lost and sick at heart, we remember them.

All: When we have joys we yearn to share, we remember them.

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Leader: So long as we live, they too shall live, for they are now a part of us,

All: As we remember them.

(Adapted from "The Gates of Prayer")

All: *Sh'ma Yisreal, Echad Amaynu, Kol Adam Echad*
Oh Israel, Our people is one, All people are one.

We pledge to pass the torch of justice and freedom,
So that the light of our ancestors perpetuated shall never be extinguished.

Leader: Please be seated.

Closing Blessing

All: May the blessing of peace and kindness,
Graciousness, goodness and compassion flow among us
and all the communities of Israel, and all the peoples of the world.

All: It is in our hands, and we shall make it so.

Announcements

Program