

The Shofar

THE UNITED JEWISH CONGREGATION OF HONG KONG

JULY/AUGUST, 1997



From the (new) Rabbi's desk . . .

Individuals Need a Community — A Community Needs a Land

I am writing these words while still in Jerusalem though most likely I will read them in print (in The Shofar) in Hong Kong. In just a few days we shall be leaving Israel for our Sabbatical year with our new community at The UJC.

I would imagine that members in our UJC community can easily identify with the notion of 'the wandering Jew.' Each year we are saying goodbye to loving friends and hello to new faces. Such is life in Hong Kong — life as a cycle of beginnings and ends.

Such is also the Jewish way of looking at life — as a cycle — with each year beginning anew with Rosh Hashanah (the Head of the year). Judaism requires of us a certain openness and readiness to begin anew each year. It's a challenge, yet a true blessing as well. How potentially exciting life can be when we are able to begin fresh each year. We grow during the year, we change, we err, we hopefully mature. How can life stay static when our lives are so dynamic.

We enter Rosh Hashanah, our New Year, as individuals coming before the Holy One, Blessed be He.

We stand before God and open our innermost heart in prayer — in judgment. Did you know that these two words are the same in the Hebrew language? To pray (*L'hitpalel*) also means to judge oneself (it is in a reflexive form).

So we begin our New Year — standing as individuals, acknowledging our mistakes during the past cycle of life — seeking forgiveness, committing ourselves to change. This powerful beginning to our year is not connected to any historical event or agricultural season in the Jewish calendar. Rosh Hashanah begins the cycle with the spotlight on you and me as simple, humble creatures of the Almighty. We can't 'hide' in the grand historical event — we can't 'lose ourselves' in history — we stand as individuals before God and, we pray as individuals as Yom Kippur day concludes that we will be inscribed and sealed in the Book of Life.

Yet Judaism does not permit us to stand very long as individuals. Though the High Holidays clearly focus on the *I*, the language of prayer is most certainly *We*. The first person plural is the common language of prayer on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur. *Our Father Our King, We have sinned, We have spoken falsely,* etc.

And here enters the Jewish value of community. We learn the message on Rosh Hashanah that although my life can begin anew each year and that I must continue to grow, change, repent, and mature each year, the context in which all this happens is the community. I cannot be Jewish

(see Community, page 2)

Program ideas for the new year

Thinking out Loud

BY RABBI JOEL OSERAN

Being your rabbi for the next ten months means, for one thing, that time is of the essence. In order to 'hit the ground running' which I hope to do, I thought I would share, in advance of my arrival, a few ideas for programs which I'd like to initiate with you during the coming year.

Some of the programs may not be 'new' — others may actually already be happening. Nevertheless, here is some 'thinking out loud' which may help move us along together. Of course, your feedback is always welcome.

Havurot. You will be hearing quite a bit this year about the Havurot project in which members come together in small 'friendship circles' for various activities, programs, etc. I am quite enthusiastic about the project and will enjoy meeting with Havurot for a variety of functions (Havdallah on Saturday nights, Chanukah candle lighting at homes, etc.).

Food for Thought. Our members are busy people. Yet, we all need to eat and we all can find an extra hour from time to time to eat and study together. I will be planning a number of 'Food for Thought' meetings at restaurants in the city where we come together, eat a tasty lunch and study a Jewish text together. It will reinforce the classic Jewish message that 'we don't live on bread alone.'

Weekend Retreat Getaways. I am a great believer in Retreat getaways. In my previous congregation, I initiated Retreat weekends of families, for women only, for adults. At each retreat we celebrated Shabbat with creative worship services, study sessions, had entertaining social activities, and just plain enjoyed each other's company in a totally Jewish environment.

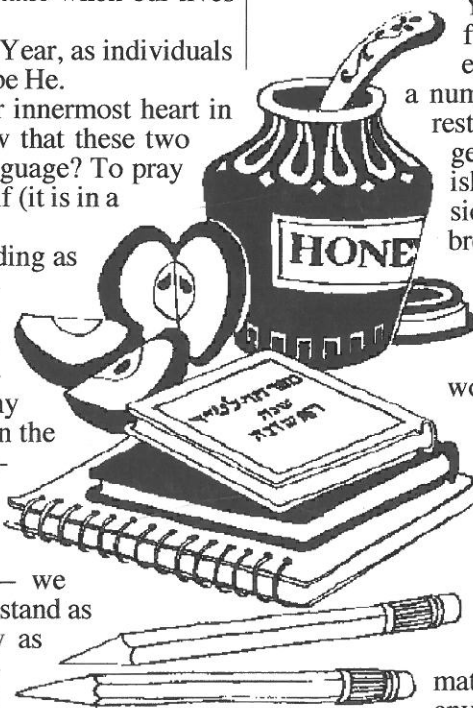
I understand one such retreat has already been planned. perhaps we can schedule in a few more during the year.

The Jewish Home Workshop. No matter how wonderful and creative our UJC environment can be, the most important place for all of us to be Jewish is in our own homes! The value of the Jewish home, with celebrations of Shabbat and holidays, of recognizing special life-cycle events, and dealing with real family issues of joy and sorrow must be high on our list of priorities.

I would like to initiate a 'Jewish Home Workshop' to help explain very practical ways in which our homes can reflect Jewish values, traditions, and rituals.

We will meet once before every Jewish holiday (and a few other times as well) to go over the 'how to' of celebration, ideas for involving children, ways to make the traditions part of your family way. It will be a chance to

(see Thinking, page 5)



From Rabbi Weiman-Kelman . . .

I would like to express a tremendous sense of gratitude to a few groups within the congregation. First of all we celebrated eleven bar and bat mitzvahs from February to July (almost two a month). There were regular study sessions with families and a weekly class for the students themselves. It was a privilege to get to know these families and the young people in particular. The kids brought an enthusiasm and seriousness to their studies that constantly amazed me. During the course of the year I witnessed their growth from adolescence into the beginnings of adulthood. I was only sorry that more members of the congregation couldn't attend the services where these young people chanted, read and taught us all.

Second, five non-Jews joined our community by completing the conversion process. This involved many hours of (group and individual) study as well as regular participation in Shabbat and festival services. I learned a great deal from their questions. I was moved by their desire to become officially part of our (not always easy to get along with) people. Seeing Jews and Judaism through their eyes has enriched my understanding of my own Jewishness.

There was a regular band of Friday night *kabbalat Shabbat* worshippers. Over the year more Hebrew was incorporated into the service. New tunes were introduced as well. The consistent thread of the Torah study was the relationship between the weekly portion, Jewish prayer, and ethics. It has been a joy to share almost a whole year Shabbat services with you. Thank you for your participation and your attention.

There was a major part of the congregation that I failed to reach. Members of the UJC comprise a majority of the families involved in Carmel School. Because the school has a clearly stated policy that delegitimizes non-Orthodox Judaism in general and excludes non-Orthodox teachers in particular I was unable to reach this important segment of the community. This despite the fact that my daughter was a student at Carmel. That our own members hold positions of leadership in the school made this fact all the more painful for me. I do not believe this situation must continue. I urge all of our members with children in Carmel to work towards increasing our influence there. The fact that Rabbi Oseran is a first class Jewish educator with many years of experience is an opportunity too good to miss.

This past year has been a time of transition for the UJC. Our founding chair Bob Green handed over the leadership to Mark Michelson. I wish to thank both of these outstanding men for their leadership and their friendship.

This has been a fabulous year for me personally and for my family as well. From myself, Paula, Zoe, Benji and Rapha — thank you all for making it possible. Next year in Jerusalem!

Levi Weiman-Kelman

Stay in touch with Levi and his family
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Tel. 02-6724878
E-mail: kkh@netvision.net.il

Building Community

(continued from Page 1)

alone; I need the *minyan* — the quorum of ten — the community — in which to play out my life and in which to realize my fullest potential as a partner with God in the act of creation.

Fortunately, we wandering Jews in Hong Kong have a solid and tight-knit Jewish community which we can call our's. The UJC and the larger Hong Kong Jewish community provide important communal pillars which support our individual journeys.

As the UJC community enters a new cycle of life this Rosh Hashanah, I know that plans are underway to strengthen our community fabric with the introduction of Havurot (Friendship Circles). Havurot will help involve more of our members in the life of the community and strengthen our communal sense of responsibility and purpose. We have an exciting challenge ahead.

If our High Holiday season included just the ten days of Repentance from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur, I could end my column here and go off to shower before Shabbat enters Jerusalem in a short time. But as we know, five days after Yom Kippur concludes, we enter the Sukkah as we begin the Festival of Sukkot — itself concluded nine days later with the joyous celebration of Simchat Torah.

Here our tradition adds yet a third dimension to our Jewish living, to our annual cycle of beginnings.

As individuals we begin the year, within the context of community we act out our lives, yet as a united people on our land we consummate our relationship with God and Torah.

The wandering Jew can sleep more securely within his community *Sukkah* but the community (throughout the Diaspora from Hong Kong to New York to London to Moscow to . . .) must realize its own tenuous nature disconnected, as it is, from the land (in Hebrew, the land means Israel).

The holiday of Sukkot reminds us that we are wanderers — we have traversed the deserts of our history more than once. Yet without our entrance to the Land of Israel and without the rooting which the Land (and State) today provides us, we Jews as individuals (and all of our communities) are no defense against the powerful forces in the world which we have seen, time and again, can wreck havoc with our lives.

Our new beginning this Rosh Hashanah should remind us anew that we Jews cannot long endure if we cut ourselves off from our community and our Community from its Land. May we all enter the cycle of this new year, 5758, with renewed commitment as Jews, as members of our community, and as the People of Israel.

A happy and healthy new beginning to each of you.

Rabbi Joel Oseran



Surfing the Web, Reform Style

From its modest beginnings less than two years ago, the Reform Judaism home page has grown to a major site that gets thousands of 'hits' each month by visitors who want to know more about our movement.

Do you want to know the official Reform stance on welfare reform, recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions, or events in Israel? The site has the answers.

Are you interested in Jewish genealogy? Browse the Jewish Archives of the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion for suggestions on how to find your roots.

Want to know what the Reform community is like where your friends are moving? Chances are the synagogue there has its own website.

You'll discover an encyclopedia of online information when you take a look at the Reform Judaism website at <http://rj.org>. It's the front door to the many user-friendly sites in Reform Judaism - as well as links to other sites of interest.

Take a look at the UAHC (Union of American Hebrew Congregations) site at <http://uahc.org> to find out about the many resources available to members of UAHC congregations: camps for young people, programs for intermarried couples, adult study opportunities, and on-line Torah study. There are also links to all UAHC member congregations that have home pages - more than 250 temples out of about 870. You can even send your questions about Reform Judaism to *Ask the Rabbi* and get a personal answer from one of our spiritual leaders via e-mail.

Just to mention a few more on-line resources: an index of Reform Responsa and a complete catalog of prayer books and publications at the CCAR (Central Conference of American Rabbis) site; sheet music and CDs available from Transcontinental Music Publications; religious school curricula from the UAHC Department of Education; information about the Women of Reform Judaism's Youth Education and Special Projects (Y.E.S.) Fund; dates for the National Federation of Temple Brotherhoods' trip to Israel; recent speeches by UAHC leaders; resolutions to be considered at the Biennial; ARZA's on-line discussion group; and more.

The list is endless and we welcome your suggestions, too. Send your ideas for information that should be added to the site to UAHC@uahc.org. Thanks for visiting.

■ courtesy of Emily Grotta, UAHC

Robyn Returns: It Must Mean the High Holidays Are Coming Soon

Robyn Helzner, acclaimed this spring as 'one of the top ten Jewish women musicians' by *Moment* magazine will return this fall, her seventh visit, as The UJC's High Holidays cantor.

She has also been significantly honored recently in another way - an invitation to her and her group, The Robyn Helzner Trio, to give a concert at the United States Holocaust Memorial Museum on August 24.

Folksinger, guitarist, and cantor and your choice of languages - English, Hebrew, Yiddish, Russian, and Ladino. It makes for quite a package.

We know it, and so do our kids. That's why so many rows are filled with parents and their children on Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur mornings when Robyn helps conduct special High Holiday services for children.

It also accounts for the popularity of the Shabbat and playtime cassettes and CD's she has recorded with her group, The Robyn Helzner Trio - *Clap Your Hands* ('Helzner Really Shines'); *A Fire Burns* (a collection of Israeli songs in Hebrew and Yiddish), and her latest, *Hearts Awaken*.

'This superb collection of Hebrew, Yiddish and Ladino songs,' a reviewer wrote in *Moment*, shows Helzner's strong, lovely voice at its best. This recording of both original and traditional melodies captures the beautiful vocal harmonies and exciting instrumental arrangements that are trademarks of Robyn Helzner and her group. . .'

Washington Jewish Week (March 13, 1997) described *Hearts Awaken* as 'passionate and captivating . . . From *Na-aleh, Na-aleh* which speaks of freedom and strength, to the spirited message of Rabbi Shlomo Carlebach's *Gam Ki Elech*, to the sadness of *Piyus*, Helzner breathes soul into the songs with the sweet sound of her voice.'



All of Robyn's recordings will be available through The UJC office.

In addition to long-standing relationships she enjoys with congregations in the Washington, D.C. area, Robyn has an active concert schedule which takes her to cities throughout the U.S. and abroad.

This includes two trips to the (then) Soviet Union as part of the first Jewish cultural tour there in more than 50 years where she did concerts tailored especially for Soviet Jews, weaving together Jewish and Russian folk songs.

In May of this year, the men's club of Congregation Nevey Shalom in Bowie, Maryland presented her with its 'Cheverut Award' in recognition of her efforts 'to bring the joys of Judaism and of Jewish music to the far-flung corners of the world.'

A native of Baltimore, Robyn began performing for Jewish organizations at age eight and went on to become a music teacher in Jewish schools. She graduated from Northwestern University where she received her artistic and theatrical training. Robyn has since built her reputation, in the words of one reviewer, 'as a performer who shares her love for our rich musical tradition with captivating melodies, enchanting stories, and lively audience participation.'

As in the previous years, Robyn will be here for nearly a month - right through Simchat Torah. Count on some vibrant, joyous singing throughout, including Sukkot and Shabbat services.

Twists and turns on the road to Judaism Converts Reveal Hopes, Worries in Search for Acceptance, Sharing as Jews

**Finding a Home for the Soul:
Interviews with Converts to Judaism**
by Catherine Hall Myrowitz
ISBN# 1-56821-322-0

From the Foreword

The stories you will read are honest and diverse, yet point to a common thread of commitment. These choosing Jews come from a variety of backgrounds and express their Jewishness in many different ways. Some find their home in the music and warm community of a synagogue or havurah or contemporary Jewish spiritual movement. Most revel in the intellectual challenge of a faith that encourages inquiry and free expression.

Jews by Choice are now synagogue presidents, some are leaders of Jewish communal organizations, some are rabbis, others cantors, some have attained a degree of knowledge that allows them to teach Talmud in the original Aramaic. It will be a degree of our own religious maturity when such attainments no longer seem remarkable. Many, of course, maintain professions in secular fields. Whatever their careers or lifestyles, Judaism has become a powerful force in their lives.

What are their hopes, their worries? First, that they will find acceptance by the community and by the people closest to them. They seek others to share the fullness of their Jewish living. As Jeff, whose story is included in this volume, says, 'I wish more Jews knew how converts feel. I wish that they could share some of our enthusiasm sometimes. And I wish that they could see the world through our eyes. I think we're fortunate because we've seen things from the other side.' Their second concern flows from their first. It is shared by every serious Jew. It is the question, 'Will my children be Jewish? Will this commitment to Judaism live on past me?'

The collective voices of Jews by Choice beckon that we listen more carefully. First, for their sake. The conversion process itself is often lacking in meaning. Contact with rabbis, teachers, and Jewish leaders, the trip to the mikveh, questioning by the Bet Din, the myriad of Jewish experiences that predate formal conversion — each of these discrete moments is filled with deep emotional meaning for Jews by Choice. We of-

ten underestimate the depth of their meaning for them. We often are too routine and mechanical in our approach to prospective Jews. They are telling us that outreach must be more sophisticated and continual and that warmth and welcome are still sorely lacking within our communities.

Their words remain most challenging when directed to us as a community. Says one, 'My observance of mitzvot is always in process.' How many Jews born and raised in their religion would make a similar statement? 'I am a returnee, not a convert,' says another. To make up for the loss of Christmas, Jews by Choice infuse Sukkot and Hanukkah with great meaning. Many send their children to Jewish day schools and study along with them. They tell us straight out, 'Jewish nonobservance is unhealthy.' They are not perfect exemplars of Jewish behavior in every sense, yet for so many, life is a way of seeing the mitzvot, the Commandments, as keys to a relationship with God and an existence of meaning.

No one is better qualified to edit and present these personal stories of choice than Catherine Hall Myrowitz. I've had the privilege of knowing her and her family for several years. She is sensitive to all the pitfalls and potential in a chosen journey to Judaism, for she has undertaken it herself. She asks the questions that need to be asked of others because she has put them to herself. Cathy demonstrates personally what a rich Jewish life might look like to those who seek it. She does this so naturally and so thoroughly that for some time, I did not know that she was a Jew by Choice and not by birth. That status is, of course, irrelevant. Some irrelevancies are worthy of celebration.

A prayer in the daily liturgy asks God for divine blessings upon the righteous proselyte of every generation. All tradition has ever asked of Jews by Choice is that they be sincere and committed in thought and deed. These days, that is all that Jews by Choice ask of the Jewish community. Whether or not their voices are heeded will be a measure of our commitment to translating Judaism's message into the language of both today and tomorrow.

■ James S. Rosen

Havurah Program To Open New Doors

Joining a havurah is a wonderful way to meet other UJC members on a small group level and to become involved in the activities of the Congregation at the same time.

A havurah (pl. *havurot*) from the Hebrew word *haver* meaning 'fellowship' or 'friend' is a small group of members formed within the Temple. Havurot meet on a regular basis and set their own individual schedules of social, cultural or educational activities.

'From my experience with havurot in other congregations,' Rabbi Oseran shas written, 'they can serve to be a very effective (and fun) way to make members feel connected to the Temple, become more involved in Temple life, and develop closer relationships with more people.'

Each havurah defines its own goals and plans and carries out its own programs with the help of the rabbi and Executive Committee members, as needed. Some groups emphasize social, family and holiday activities while others are more study oriented. Havurot often participate in Congregational events (Shabbat dinners, services, etc.) as a group.

Activities can include everything from learning how to bake challah, Yom Kippur break-the-fast get-togethers, and book discussions to attending plays or concerts, junk outings, Saturday excursions, holiday celebrations, and 'pizza nights' (how The UJC got started).

As initially envisioned by UJC planners, each havurah will consist of ten people and meet ten times a year. Some havurot may wish to include more members or meet less frequently.

A UJC mailing sent in early August requests members to express their interest in the type of havurah they would like to join (singles, families with children, young professionals, etc.), and geographic preference (Mid-Levels, South Side, Discovery Bay, etc.).

Planners hope some havurot can begin meeting in September. The High Holidays are seen as an excellent opportunity for members to get together and form havurot, and for Congregational leaders to explain and promote the program.

Members may contact The UJC Havurah Committee headed by Cara Case and Julie Silberger for more information. Robert L. Meyer and Diana Goldman are also helping guide the process of building havurot.

Join the 'Shabbat Starter' Havurah

Kick-Start Shabbat with

- The Ultimate Power Breakfast
- Best Harbour View in Town
- Stimulating Discussion
(on all subjects cosmic and otherwise)

Inspired by:

- one of the guiding principles of Judaism —
'*You Gotta Eat, Don't You?*'
- and the fact that a Jewish gathering
without food is a non-event

Bob Green invites* members**
to join him every fourth Friday

8:00 A.M. - 9:30 A.M.
September 19, 1997
(first meeting)

American Club, 49th floor

'49ers Coffee Shop
Exchange Square II, Central District

*only \$58.00 for a selection of
juice, fresh fruit, Danish pastries,
cereal, toast, yoghurt, coffee or tea

** limited seats available;
call Bob at 2735-3037



Rabbi Lennard Thal helps The UJC look ahead Top Reform Leader to Visit, Conduct Leadership Seminar

Executive Committee members will get the opportunity to benefit from the talents and experience of one of the top leaders in Reform Judaism, the vice-president of the body that guides and administers Reform Jewish congregations throughout the U.S., the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (UAHC).



Rabbi Lennard R. Thal, on his way to Singapore where he will be leading High Holiday services for the fifth straight year, will conduct a leadership seminar for The UJC's Executive Committee on Sunday, September 28.

The Rabbi has facilitated scores of temple leadership seminars over the years. In this one, tailored to specific UJC interests, he will concentrate on clarifying Committee member roles and responsibilities; creating a leadership development program within the Congregation; and setting priorities. He will also deal with such topics as membership building, future planning, rabbi search, and program development.

The Rabbi, who is hoping to meet as many members as possible, will also participate in the Havdallah ceremony, dinner, and Selichot service on Saturday, September 27.

Rabbi Thal, with degrees from Princeton (Religion), Stanford (Law) and Hebrew Union College (where he was ordained in 1973), became vice-president of the UAHC in 1995. Previously he served as the UAHC's Pacific Southwest regional director and from 1973 to 1982, as Associate Dean at the Los Angeles campus of Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion.

He is the recipient of numerous academic and community awards, prizes, and honors and is affiliated with dozens of Reform Jewish institutions and organizations as chairman, director, or board member. The Rabbi also currently serves as Executive Editor of *Reform Judaism* magazine.

Married to the former Linda Rabinowitch of Palo Alto, California, Rabbi and Mrs. Thal have two daughters, Ariella, 17, and Alona, 22.

Thinking Out Loud

By Rabbi Joel Oseran

(continued from page 1)

ask all your questions (even the silly ones you never dared ask before).

We will talk also about family life in general — about raising children, about insights in passing on our Jewish tradition in ways consistent with our contemporary life styles, about the pains of loss through death or separation, and much more. We will listen to each other and learn from each other.

These are some 'Thoughts Out Loud' — I hope we see them and others become deeds as well.

You Loved Shabbat at Sea I, II, & III. Now join us for:

Shabbat at Sea IV

Saturday, November 22, 12:30 P.M.

Attention: 4 to 74-year-olds.
Don't miss this unique
Shabbat experience!

*Come aboard the S.S. Shabbat
for The UJC's Cruise
to a Mystery Destination
in the South China Sea*

'Captain' Joel Oseran will conduct, topside

❖ *Sabbath Afternoon Service*

and, simultaneously, on the lower deck, there will be

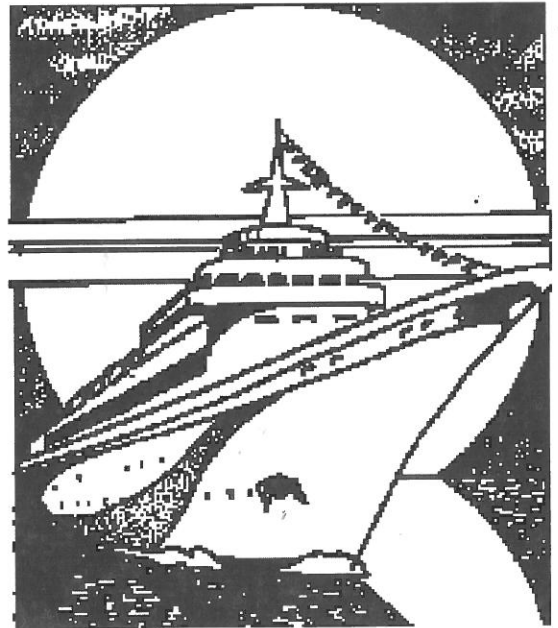
❖ *Special Sabbath Activities
for children*

❖ *Delicious Lunch Buffet*

❖ *Nature Walk or Swim*

Departure: 12:30 P.M.. from Queen's Pier next
to Star Ferry. Return: approximately 5:00 P.M..

\$150.00 adults, \$75.00 children



For a fresh perspective on Shabbat, try some salt air, chardonnay, and a stroll through an old Chinese village.

The November sun gives a new slant to things when you're out on the South China Sea.

And listen. It just takes some friends and perhaps a guitar to really hear the song.

You might come away with a new regard for a very old tradition.

Shabbat — making rest count more than work.

*[Abraham rejoiced in it, Issac sang.
Jacob and his children were refreshed
by its rest. In this rest are love and shar-
ing, truth and faithfulness and peace,
quiet and safety. It is the perfect rest
that You have willed. Gates Of Prayer]*

Yes! I (we) want to join Shabbat at Sea IV

Enclosed is my (our) check for \$ _____ for _____ adult(s) and _____
children made payable to The United Jewish Congregation of H.K.

Name _____

Tel _____ Fax _____

Please mail to The UJC, GPO Box 5259, Hong Kong
or call 2523-2985 to book by phone

THE UJC CONTRIBUTORS CIRCLE CAMPAIGN

Membership Responds to Appeal

The UJC gratefully acknowledges the following donations totaling HK \$242,000 received to date in response to The Contributors Circle Campaign, launched in coordination with this year's dues increase to make up the \$500,000 gap in the Congregation's budget.

MAY THEIR NAMES, AND ALL, BE INSCRIBED FOR BLESSING IN THE BOOK OF LIFE.

○ Aleph Circle (\$72,000 or more)

- ROBERT L. MEYER

○ Gimmel Circle (\$18,000 to \$35,999)

- ROBERT AND SHERI DORFMAN
- JOEL AND MAGGIE EISEMANN, ZACHERY, BENJAMIN, AND PERRY
- DAN AND DIANA GOLDMAN
- CHARLES S. MONAT

○ Dalet Circle (\$7,200 to \$17,999)

- MARK AND KATE MICHELSON, MAX AND AARON

○ Hay Circle (\$3,600 to \$7,999)

- ARTHUR AND LINDA BELFER
- CAROL BETSON AND HENRY GOLDSTEIN
- JOSEPH AND ELANE FINE
- JONATHAN FEIGER AND NANCY LABEN
- BOB AND GRACE GREEN, DAVID AND JONATHAN
- PETER AND APRIL KAMINSKY
- STEVE, MASAKO, AND JAKE LEVITT
- STACY AND BRIAN PALBAUM
- DIANE AND LEONARD PATSINER
- JEAN-ERIC AND MELANIE SALATA

○ Vav Circle (\$1,800 to \$3,599)

- ANONYMOUS (2)
- KEN AND DEBBIE BELL
- KERIN AND ADAM CONN
- MAUREEN AND JONATHAN FOX
- JANET GOLDEN
- ALEX GRINBERG
- JULIE AND ALAN JACOBSON
- PATSY AND ED HANDLEMAN
- DANIEL KIRWIN
- LEONARD AND CHRISTEL LANE
- JANETH AND DAVID WEIL

○ Zayin Circle (\$720 to \$1,799)

- ANONYMOUS (4)
- ELSA AND MARTIN BERMAN
- MARGARET BRITTON
- ELIOT COHEN
- PERRY FEUER
- MICHAEL GREENBERG
- SAUL LOCKHART
- ANN LUBART
- VIVIANE MEYER
- NEAL AND JANE HORWITZ
- TERRY AND JEFFREY PAULE
- DAN SCHWARTZ

Children's Circles

○ Het Circle (\$360 to \$719)

- EMMA CONN
- GERALD CONN
- CARLY DORFMAN
- JUSTIN DORFMAN
- JASMINE GOULD-WILSON
- ZACHERY GOULD-WILSON
- DAVID HANDLEMAN
- MICHAEL HANDLEMAN

○ Tet Circle (\$180 to \$359)

- ANONYMOUS (3)
- ANNA BERMAN
- JESSICA BERMAN
- JACOB BERMAN
- ARIEL KAMINSKY
- BENJAMIN KAMINSKY
- DANIEL KAMINSKY
- ALIANA WEIL
- SAMUEL WEIL

○ Yod Circle (\$1 to \$179)

- VICTORIA EDWARDS
- BENJAMIN MEYER
- MICHAEL MEYER
- RACHELLE MEYER

Campaign to help Shanghai children, elderly extended to October 30 UJC Members, Friends Push Shanghai Fund Past \$200,000

In the true spirit of Jewish giving, or *tzedakah* — literally, doing what is just or ethical — members and friends of The UJC have contributed to 'righting the balance' by returning a kindness to Chinese in a district of Shanghai which was one of the few places in the world to open its doors to Jewish refugees from Europe in World War II.

The fundraising effort supports a pilot project by the American Jewish Joint Distribution Committee which provides top specialists to assist the elderly, and children with special needs. The UJC has extended the campaign to October 30 to allow those returning from summer vacation to send in their contributions, including those who have made pledges.

In addition to the generous contributions listed below, The UJC wishes to acknowledge with deepfelt gratitude those who sent in donations of *chai* (\$18,000) or multiples of *chai*, as follows:

GERALD AND ANNE GODFREY

THE KADOORIE CHARITABLE FOUNDATIONS (MICHAEL KADOORIE)

IRA KAYE

ROBERT L. MEYER

SPECIAL ASSETS FOUNDATION (ROBERT L. MEYER)

CHARLES S. MONAT

MAY THEIR NAMES AND ALL BE INSCRIBED FOR BLESSING IN THE BOOK OF LIFE

EDWARD ABRAM AND JOANNE CHEUNG

PAUL ALEXANDER

TED AND MARIE AXLER

JOYCE BARNATHAN AND STEVE STRASSER

KENNETH AND DEBRA BELL

CARA AND ANDREW CASE

EMMA AND GERALD CONN

JENNIFER AND SEAN DEBOW

RENEE AND JONATHAN FENBY

ALBERT AND SHARON FINE

BENJAMIN AND FIONA FRANKEL

ALICE FREUND

PIERRE AND MAY GABISON

JANET GOLDEN

DAN AND DIANA GOLDMAN

GRACE AND ROBERT GREEN

PATRICIA HERBIG AND GARY GREENBERG

ALEX GRINBERG

EDWARD AND PATSY HANDELMAN

AMY AND PHILLIP HEILBERG

ISABELLA HO

HERTHA AND BERT HORWITZ

NEAL AND JANE HORWITZ

LEE KAPLAN

APRIL AND PETER KAMINSKY

DANIEL KIRWIN

DENNIS AND MARY LEVENTHAL

SALLY AND SHALOM LEVY

SAUL LOCKHART

KATE AND MARK MICHELSON

STEPHANIE MITCHELL

RODA AND MIRON MUSHKAT

CARLA MILNER-BARRY

ROBIN AND JAMES KAPTZAN

MELANIE NUTBEAM

SONIA PARK

STACY AND BRYAN PALBAUM

DAVID AND JUDY PAYNE

TERRY AND JEFFREY PAULE

AMY AND RICHARD REINGOLD

JEAN SALATA

MELVIN AND DIANA SATOK

LINDA SIMON

MARC STRAUSSBERG

SOPHIE AND ALEXANDER TUNIK

DAWNNA AND DAVID WAYBURNE

STEPHANE AND SOPHIE WLMET

JOY AND DAVID ZWEIG



Sukkot under the Sun & Stars

*with Rabbi Joel Oseran and
cantor/folksinger/guitarist
Robyn Helzner*

A celebration of the harvest, of the fulfilment of labor, and of life itself — the pleasures, senses and joy of being human. Help us build, decorate and celebrate with beautiful music and delicious food. Join us in this great, fun, family project and service in the heart of Central on Sunday afternoon, October 12 and Friday evening, October 17.

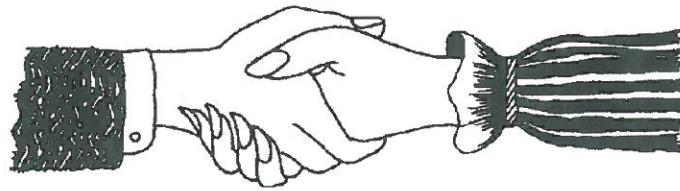


Sukkah Building/Decorating Party
Sunday, October 12, 3:30 - 5:30 p.m.
Great fun for the kids! Parents too!
Refreshments will be served

◆

Children's Shabbat Service
Friday, October 17, 5:45 p.m.
followed by
Shabbat Service, 6:45 p.m.
 UJC Shabbat Supper to follow; details to be announced
The Terrace, Special Assets Limited
6f, Diamond Exchange Building,
8 Duddell Street, Central
(office of Robert L. Meyer)

Make the Connection



*with Jewish tradition, wisdom, friends
through Rabbi Joel Oseran*

UJC Fall Retreat

Saturday & Sunday, November 8 & 9

*Join a search for the relevance of traditional Jewish teachings
to modern lives and times through study and discussion.*

*Join your friends for some spiritual networking,
country air, and restful stay in a mountaintop lodge.*

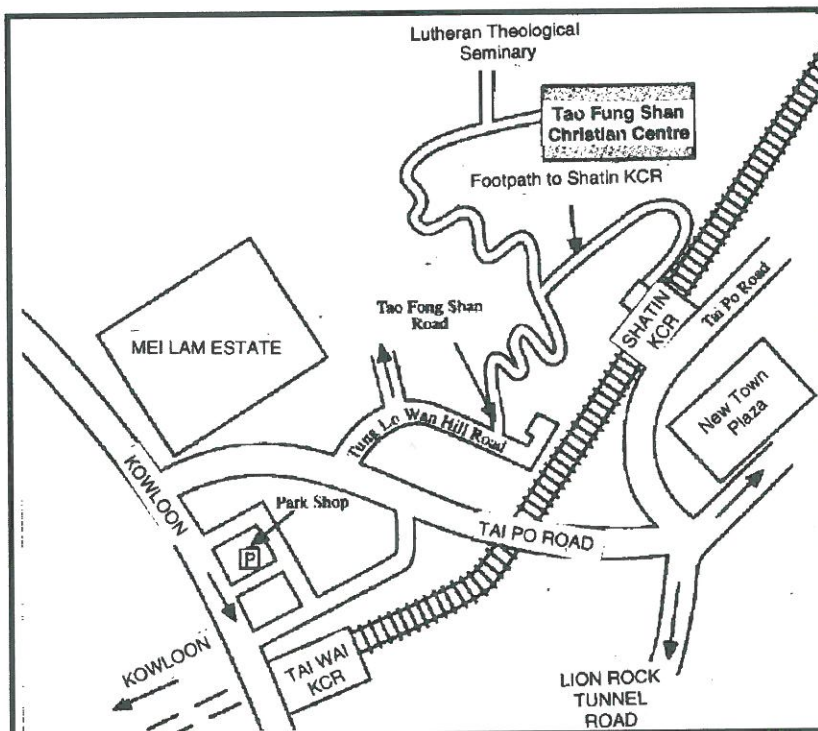
Tao Fong Shan Ecumenical Center

33 Tao Fong Shan Road, Shatin, N.T.

HK\$350.00

(double occupancy; single room \$450.00)

- Includes overnight lodging; dinner, breakfast, and lunch plus study and discussion sessions.
- 20 rooms only; to be allocated on first-come, first-serve basis; call UJC office to book
- Participants not staying overnight may pay at the daily rate of \$100.00 to join the sessions (includes meals)



Saturday, November 8

Noon — 1:45: arrival and check in
2:00: Study I
3:15: Coffee/tea break
3:30: Study II
5:00: Rest, relaxation
6:00: Havdallah Service
6:30: Dinner
7:30: Study III
8:45: To be announced

Sunday, November 9

8:30: Breakfast
9:30: Morning Service
9:45: Study IV
10:45: Coffee/tea break
11:00: Walk and talk
12:00: Lunch
1:30: Departure

Celebrate Simchat Torah with The UJC



Family Service, Songs and Dancing

with Rabbi Joel Oseran
and Robyn Helzner

followed by

coffee/tea, juice, cookies
and snacks for the children

*A wonderful way to introduce your
children to the joys of being Jewish*

Wednesday, October 22

6:30 - 8:00 P.M.

Thursday, October 23

10:30 A.M. - 12:00 noon

Auditorium, Robinson Place

E-mail from Elyse in Beijing If You're Traveling...

The Jewish Community of Beijing, Kehillah Beijing, holds its events and services on the 3rd floor Ballroom of the Capital Club, located in the Capital Mansions complex (contact The UJC office for a flyer which includes the address in Chinese characters). If you wish to join for services or an event, please contact me. It is best for visitors to call first if they wish to stay for dinner. I make myself most accessible (see below).

Friday night services, held each week beginning at 7 P.M., are conducted by members of the community. A volunteer prepares a short piece on the Torah portion of the week and there is short discussion in lieu of a sermon. We invite guests to help lead the service if they like and welcome them to teach us new songs and tunes.

Immediately following services we have kiddush and *hamotzi*. We also invite visitors from afar to light candles and lead the kiddish. A buffet dinner is offered for RMB120/pax which begins at about 8:30. We have vegetarian and fish selections and delicious, locally-made bagels.

We hold services for most holidays and festivals. Often those services are followed by a community meal. For Purim and Chanukah we have wonderful parties for children of all ages.

We regularly have about 25 - 30 people on Friday nights and many weeks we have visitors joining us to swell the numbers. On holidays we have 100 or more.

I came to China in 1979 and together with my partner Roberta who also came to China that year, have been responsible for organizing the events for the community and keeping us together as a cohesive group. Until a few years ago, all events took place in our home.

Since then the community has grown considerably as has the number of children. My data base just before the summer had about 100 (individuals or heads of households). The majority of the community is very transient staying just one to three years. There is a very small core of about a dozen people who are more or less permanent (meaning around 10 years in Beijing) and who plan to stay for another few years.

Pooling the Jewish education resources among us we have put together a cradle roll class for the younger children and a study class for the adults.

We were also able to prepare my son Ari for his Bar Mitzvah which took place last October. [The UJC's Rabbi Howard Kosovske conducted the service and Robyn Helzner performed as cantor.] Ari was able to read from our own Sefer Torah which was kindly donated several years ago by Dr. and Mrs. Jordan Phillips.

We also have a well trained Chinese klezmer band whose first (and only!) gig to date was the aforementioned Bar Mitzvah and is ready to be fired up for another *simcha*.

Another important resource is our community Bubby who is frequently called upon to spoil young children with treats, teach the chefs at the Capital Club to prepare Jewish style foods and generally exude Yiddishkeit. We are all very lucky that my Mom, Elaine Silverberg, decided to retire in Beijing to be close to her only grandchild.

Elyse Beth Silverberg

tel: (010) 6512-6662 ext. 112

(leave voice mail or ask for my assistant Traci Smith)

fax: (010) 6512-9903; mobile: 1391131093

home: (010) 6505-3701 (ask for Elyse or Elaine)

email: eslvrbrg@public3.bta.net.cn

■ Elyse Silverberg

Welcome New Members

Eric Geier (USA)

securities trader, Instinet Pacific Ltd.
prev. affil.: Temple Emanuel, New York (Reform)

David and Ivich Neuville (USA)

& Amanda, 2

David: attorney, Baker & McKenzie;
Ivich: president, AWA (Hong Kong)
prev. affil.: Temple Emanuel, Livingston, NJ (Reform)

Maurice and Irene Ser (UK)

prev. affil.: Kingston, Surrey, England (Liberal)

Thanks!

Charles S. Monat for again sponsoring the costs of producing and printing The UJC Membership Directory

Ariez Vachha (Jackie's husband) and his engineer Biondi from Moore Stephens Associates Ltd. for their valuable time in networking the UJC's computers and installing new synagogue software.

Rabbi David Sodendorp, Merle Wolin, Alistaire Hayman, Ken Bell, and Jonathan Green for leading services following Rabbi Weiman-Kelman's departure

Al and Sharon Fine for donating flowers for Rosh Hashanah services

Ken and Debbie Bell for donating flowers for Yom Kippur services

Rachel Taylor for helping in the UJC office

Mazel Tov!

Dr. Carol Betson Goldstein and Mr. Henry Goldstein on the engagement of their daughter **Jennifer Lynn Betson to Norman Fraser Jones**

Rabbi Yaakov Kermaier on his appointment as Rabbi for Ohel Leah Synagogue

Gary and Aline Silberg on the birth of their son William

Hira Shrestha and his wife Gita on the birth of their daughter Bidhya

Shabbat Sponsorships

Merle Wolin, on the occasion of her mother's *yartzeit*

Paulette Bazerman, in wishing for the safety of her family during their summer vacation

Brian and Michelle Blank, in celebration of their marriage

Alyshe Tetens in honor of Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman, on the occasion of his departure and return to Israel

Farewell

Rabbi Levi Weiman-Kelman, Paula, Zoe, Benji, Rapha (see page 2)

Rachel Taylor: c/o Thornhills, Northdown Close, Mainstone, Kent, ME14 2ER UK

Martin Gershon: 24 Rundell Crescent, Hendon, London NW4 3BP, UK

Dave, Joyce, Ariel and Jed Lindorff: 875 Welsh Road; Maple Glen, Pennsylvania 19002

In mid-August we will be moving from Hong Kong to Philadelphia where Joyce will join the music faculty at Temple University. We are grateful to The UJC for the friendship, spirit and community it gave our family for the past five years. Special thanks to Levi and Paula Weiman-Kelman for the wonderful teaching and support of Ariel in preparation for her Bat Mitzvah, a life-long gift. We wish everyone well and will miss you! Please stay in touch.

Sincerely,

Dave, Joyce, Ariel and Jed



The United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong

Address for correspondence:
GPO Box 5259, Hong Kong

Office: Jewish Community Centre
70 Robinson Rd., Mid-Levels, Hong Kong
Tel. 2523-2985; Fax 2523-3961
email: jvuic@hk.super.net

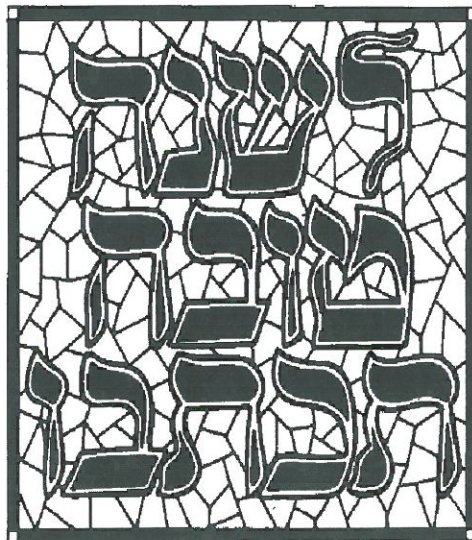
Rabbi Joel Oseran: Tel. 2546-6158
Home Tel: 2517-7967; Home Fax: 2803-0709
mobile: 9053-4003; email: JDO@hk.super.net
Executive Administrator: Ms Jacqueline Vachha
Chairman: Tel. 2866-2313, Fax 2866-1917

Executive Committee

Mark Michelson Chairman
Jonathan Feiger Vice-chairman; Educ.; Admin.
Terry Paule Vice-chairman; Membership
Robert Meyer Treasurer; Legal; Liaison
Ken Bell Secretary; Religious & Ritual
Brian Blank Education
Cara Case Fundraising, Outreach
Joseph Fine Membership
Diana Goldman Social, Planning
Robert Green Editor, *The Shofar*
Daniel Kirwin Fundraising, Administration
Charles Monat Community Relations; Liaison
Julie Silberger Education
David Zweig Without portfolio
Honorary: Carol Betson, Peter Kaminsky, Benjamin Frankel, Albert Fine, Janet Golden

The Shofar is published bi-monthly by The United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong. Requests for copies and notification of address changes should be addressed to The UJC office.

Articles and letters from members and friends are most welcome and encouraged. Address all submissions to Editor, *The Shofar*, G.P.O. Box 6083, Hong Kong; by fax to 2730-5507; or E-mail to rgreenhk@hk.super.net



Prayer and Worship

Shabbat services conducted by Rabbi Joel Oseran are held every Friday night in the Auditorium, Robinson Place, Jewish Community Centre, 70 Robinson Road, Mid-Levels, followed by dinner in the JCC coffee shop. A pre-service Fellowship Oneg begins at 6:45 P.M. Saturday morning services (normally twice monthly) begin at 10:30 A.M. and are followed by a kiddush/lunch.

Friday, August 29, 7:00 P.M.
Shabbat Family Service

Friday, September 5, 7:00 P.M.
Shabbat Family Service

Friday, September 12, 7:00 P.M.
Shabbat Family Service

Saturday, September 13, 10:30 A.M.
Shabbat Service with prospective
B'nai Mitzvot students and parents

Friday, September 19, 7:00 P.M.
Shabbat Family Service

Friday, September 26, 7:00 P.M.
Shabbat Family Service

Saturday, September 27, 7:00 P.M.
Havdalah Ceremony & Light Buffet Supper
followed by Study and Selichot Service

Wednesday, October 1, 7:30 P.M.
Erev Rosh Hashanah Service (page 14)

Thursday, October 2, 10:30 A.M.
Rosh Hashanah Service (page 14)

Friday, October 3, 10:30 A.M.
Rosh Hashanah Service, 2nd day (page 14)

Friday, October 3, 7:00 P.M.
Shabbat Shuvah (page 14)

Friday, October 10, 8:00 P.M.
Kol Nidre Service (page 14)

Saturday, October 11, 10:30 A.M.
Yom Kippur Service (page 14)

Sunday, Oct. 12, 3:30 - 5:30 P.M.
Sukkah building & decorating
with Rabbi Oseran and Robyn Helzner
The Terrace, Special Assets Limited
(see page 9)

Friday, October 17
Children's Sukkot Service, 5:45 P.M.
Shabbat Family Service, 6:45 P.M.
conducted by Rabbi Oseran and Robyn Helzner
followed by Shabbat supper
The Terrace, Special Assets Limited

Wednesday, October 22, 7:00 P.M.
Simchat Torah Service

Thursday, October 23, 10:30 A.M.
Simchat Torah Service

Friday, October 24, 7:00 P.M.
Shabbat Family Service

Friday, October 31, 7:00 P.M.
Shabbat Family Service

Friday, November 7, 14, 21, 28: 7:00 P.M.
Shabbat Family Service

Saturday, Sunday, November 8, 9
Retreat (page 10)

Saturday, November 22, 12:30 P.M.
Shabbat at Sea IV (page 6)



Please note: sponsor required for the August 29 service;
please contact Jackie at The UJC Office

START PLANNING NOW!

Parent and child
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Orientation
with Rabbi Joel Oseran

September 13, 10:30 A.M.
Shabbat Morning Service
Auditorium, Robinson Place

Following the service, Rabbi Joel Oseran will meet with all children (and their parents) planning to celebrate Bar/Mat Mitzvah this year or next to give a general orientation to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah program and establish a year-long program of study.

Make The UJC and JCC Your Family in Hong Kong

The United Jewish Congregation of Hong Kong welcomes you to our High Holiday services and invites you to worship and celebrate with us throughout the entire year as a member. Your UJC membership will also entitle you and your family to membership in the Jewish Community Centre at no additional cost, including full use of all the JCC's social, educational, and recreational facilities.

MEMBERSHIP FEES

INDIVIDUAL

HK\$3000 (US\$387)

YOUNG PROFESSIONAL (UNDER 30)

HK\$2400 (US\$310)

FAMILY

HK\$5,000 (US\$645)

NON-RESIDENT

HK\$1300 (US\$168)

The UJC is committed to offering affordable membership to everyone and accommodating those with special circumstances. Call The UJC office for details.

Urgent — Pay Dues Now

To receive High Holiday tickets in advance and avoid congestion at the reception desk, members are urged to pay their dues without delay. This will greatly ease the job of UJC staff and volunteers who need to concentrate on handling out-of-town visitors and non-member residents wishing to attend High Holiday services.

Dues statements went out in early July. Members who haven't received statements or have questions should call the Executive Administrator, Jackie Vachha at 2523-2985.

High Holidays for Visitors

As in previous years, The UJC welcomes visitors to its High Holiday services. At the same time, we ask for a contribution to help meet the many expenses involved. The suggested donation is \$1000.00.

High Holiday tickets may be obtained in advance by contacting Ms Jackie Vachha at The UJC office or at the reception desk outside the Drama Theatre before services. Contributions are deductible for both H.K. and U.S. tax purposes.

Alternatively, visitors may choose to become UJC members and receive, in addition to High Holiday tickets, full membership privileges in both The UJC and Jewish Community Centre.

Submit Names for Yizkor Service

Members who would like the names of loved ones read by Rabbi Oseran at the Yizkor (Memorial) Service on Yom Kippur afternoon should submit the information well in advance, typed or clearly printed, preferably by fax or letter to The UJC office. Alternatively, the name(s) may be given directly to Rabbi Oseran before the service. If there is any question about pronunciation, please give a phonetic spelling or other indication of how the name(s) should be pronounced.

Reward for Missing Yarmulkes

Receive a free dinner for returning the most *yarmulkes* (*kippot*), a number of which have mysteriously disappeared into suit pockets over the past year. In an effort to gather enough for High Holiday services, all those holding UJC kippot will be forgiven under an amnesty declared by Executive Administrator Jackie Vachha.

High Holidays and Shabbat Shuvah

Schedule of Services

5758/1997

conducted by

Rabbi Joel Oseran

Robyn Helzner performing as Cantor



ROSH HASHANAH

Erev Rosh Hashanah

Wednesday, October 1, 7:30 P.M.

Rosh Hashanah Day

Thursday, October 2

Children's Service, 9:30 A.M.

Morning Service, 10:30 A.M.

Rosh Hashanah Lunch follows Service

Rosh Hashanah, 2nd Day

Friday, October 3

Morning Service, 10:30 A.M.

Auditorium, Robinson Place

Rosh Hashanah Lunch will be served following the Service



Shabbat Shuvah

Friday, October 3, 6:45 P.M.

Auditorium, Robinson Place

Shabbat dinner follows Service



YOM KIPPUR

Kol Nidre

Friday, October 10, 8:00 P.M.

Yom Kippur Day

Saturday, October 11

Children's Service, 9:30 A.M.

Morning Service, 10:30 A.M.

Recess, 12:30

Discussion, 2:30 P.M.

Yizkor (Memorial Service), 3:30 P.M.

Afternoon Service, 4:00 P.M.

Neila (concluding) Service, 5:30 P.M.

Light break-the-fast refreshments will be served following the Service



Except where noted, all services are at:

Hong Kong Academy for Performing Arts

Drama Theatre

1 Gloucester Road, Wanchai, HK