

# Shanah Tovah!

Happy New Year!

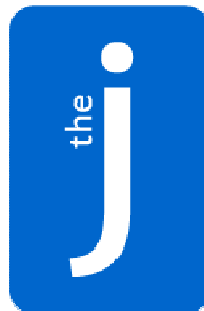
May this year be one filled with blessing, health, and peace for you and your entire family!

From all of us at  
The Jewish Community Center

INSPIRING  
JEWISH JOURNEYS

For more information about Rosh Hashanah or other Jewish resources contact

Rabbi Brad Horwitz, Director  
Helene Mirowitz Department of  
Jewish Community Life  
314-442-3271 or [bhorwitz@jccstl.org](mailto:bhorwitz@jccstl.org)



*Rosh Hashanah:  
The Jewish New Year*

Rosh Hashanah, meaning "head of the year," falls on the first two

days of the autumn month of *Tishrei* and is celebrated as the Jewish New Year.

It was common many years ago to begin the economic year at the Fall harvest, when crops were brought to market. Autumn also marked the annual coronation of the king and helps explain why the theme of God's kingship is central to the Rosh Hashanah liturgy. Rosh Hashanah also marks the birthday of the world and a time that God reaffirms the first act of creation. Humans similarly confront judgment and spiritual rebirth during this season.



A major symbol associated with this holiday is the *Book of Life*, in which God is said to inscribe our deeds and to seal our fate for the coming year.

Rosh Hashanah is the beginning of the time for penitence and renewal as we reflect on the past year and ways in which we will be better human beings in the year to come. This process of atonement and spiritual rebirth ends ten days later with the celebration of Yom Kippur. This period is called the ten days of repentance when people seek out friends and family that they may have hurt or offended during the past year to ask for forgiveness entering the new year.

# Apples and Honey



During Rosh Hashanah, it is traditional to eat apples dipped in honey, to symbolize our hopes for a "sweet" new year. The apple is dipped in honey, the blessing for eating tree fruits is recited, the apple is tasted, and then the second prayer is recited.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם בּוֹרֵא פְּרֵי הָעֵץ

*Barukh atah Adonai Elohaynu melekh ha-olam, borei peri ha'etz.*

Praised are you, Adonai our God, ruler of the universe who created the fruit of the tree.

**Take a bite from the apple dipped in honey, then continue**

יְהִי רָצוֹן מִלְּפָנֶיךָ יי אֱלֹהֵינוּ וְאֵלֵינוּ הִי אַבוֹתֵינוּ שְׁתַּחֲדֵשׁ עֲלֵינוּ  
שָׁנָה טוֹבָה וּמְתוּקָה

*Y'hee ratzon mee-l'fanekha, Adonai Elohaynu v'elohey avoteynu  
sh'tichadeish aleinu shanah tovah um'tukah.*

May it be Your will, Lord our God and God of our ancestors that you renew for us a good and sweet year.



## The Shofar

The *shofar* (ram's horn) is blown during worship to announce God as King and to serve as a call to each of us to reflect, atone for past mistakes, and usher in the new year with a fresh clean start. The *shofar* is blown one hundred times in synagogue on each of the two days, except when the holiday falls on Shabbat when the *shofar* is traditionally not blown at all.

# Family Activities



## Apple Picking

What a great way to get ready for the holiday as a family! And a lot of fun too! Apples are not only great with honey, but can also be used to make an apple pie dessert and apple honey cake, a yummy Rosh Hashanah treat.

## New Year's Cards

Sending New Year's Cards to family and friends is a wonderful Rosh Hashanah tradition. Children can use construction paper, marker, glitter, beads and other decorations. Another idea is to make a collage around a family photo. Don't forget to include a message as well as a New Year's greeting. The traditional greetings include:

*Shanah Tovah*

A Good Year

*L'shanah Tovah Tikateivu V'Techateimu*

May you be written and sealed for a good year.

## Tzedakah and Chesed Projects

The liturgy for Rosh Hashanah includes the phrase "Teshuvah (repentance), tefilah (prayer) and tzedakah (justice/charity) avert the evil decree." Getting involved in *tzedakah* and *chesed* (acts of kindness) projects are a great way to spend time with your family and make a contribution to our community. Suggestions: volunteer at a local soup kitchen, home for the aged or homeless shelter; advocate for an organization; invite college students or individuals and families to your home on a holiday who have no local family of their own.