



Nitzotzot Min HaNer

Kiruv Programs for the Yamim Noraim

Volume #21, September 2005

The high holidays are the ideal time to bring new people into your organization. This may be the only time of year when many secular, non-practicing Jews demonstrate some connection to their religion. People are seeking a warm, “with-it,” environment that keeps the program simple and most of all, which is cheap.

Some people may be coming in with an open mind, searching for inspiration. Most are coming in to “discharge their duties” as Jews. Either case is a tremendous opportunity to meet them, connect with them and help them realize that there is more to Judaism than they appreciate.

It is vital that every outreach organization utilize this time appropriately and plan a stimulating program to attract as many target members as possible.

The following are programming suggestions from various sources that have been used successfully as high holidays outreach initiatives.

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PRE-HOLIDAY PROGRAMS

NJOP Hebrew reading crash course

This year, learn Hebrew! Designed for Jews with little or no background in Hebrew, the free Hebrew Reading Crash Course concentrates on teaching the Hebrew alphabet and reading skills. In only five 1-1/2 hour weekly sessions, participants learn to read Hebrew and receive a free copy of NJOP's Reishith Binah Hebrew primer. 77% of participants in this course go on to the Level II Hebrew course, or the Crash Course in Basic Judaism. Due to large numbers of Russian-speaking participants, a special Russian edition of the Reishith Binah primer has been published.

Contact: National Jewish Outreach Program, 1-800-44-HEBRE(W) (1-800-444-3273)

Honey drive

Advertise that you are selling beautiful packages that include jars of honey, apples, and other holiday delicacies. You can offer different packages for different prices including larger or smaller baskets, fancier or simpler packaging, etc. The target audience for purchase is either religious or non-religious participants, specifically for them to give to non-religious friends/family members in order to increase overall awareness. Core organizational participants can do much of the legwork – buying, packing, marketing, and selling. This gets them involved in Kiruv actively as leaders. This program can be reproduced on Chanukah and Purim as well.

Contact: Rabbi Chaim Sampson, Aish NY - csampson@aish.com

Apple 'n Honey Dip - [Alternative Title - High Holiday Fair]

Core organizational participants, or anyone who wants to be involved, man booths in a large room/auditorium, and each gives a short presentation about one, specific aspect of the holiday. Visitors are invited to stop at each booth, where they get hands-on information about a specific theme of the holiday, i.e. *shofar*, judgment, apple in honey, etc., in sequential order of ritual events. In addition, they get sheets to take home to prepare. The entire program should be planned to take about one hour. The people who run the booths come in either early or on a previous day to learn what they need to know.

To advertise, hang up flyers in local day schools and place ads in local newspapers. This program works particularly well for families.

AJOP Book, Effective Outreach Programs, Rabbi Hershel Becker - (305) 238-6833.

9/11 The Year the Shofar Sounded Early (The Video)

Produced by AJOP/Afikim Foundation. This video was designed to evoke feelings of the days following 9/11 and how it felt that year to enter into the high holidays. The video features powerful footage of the incident along with a collection of short,



Holiday Gifts

This is an appropriate time to send presents to board members and other important people. One idea is to make a calendar with your logo, so recipients remember you all year. This is also a good opportunity to raise some money by selling ads in the calendar.

Another appropriate gift is a leather-bound copy of the simanim, with one side in English and one side in Hebrew. This is inexpensive and can be easily obtained from printers in Israel.

Contact – Rabbi Yehuda Freilich, Yisraelink - Chicago – 847-982-Link (5465)

Other promotional items

You can sell other holiday preparation kits/books/sets/games, either at a pre-holiday fair, or over the web.

Women's cooking class

Help participants prepare in a fun and interesting way and also get some tasty kosher recipes. Organize a holiday cooking class with holiday favorites for a traditional crowd, such as apple cake, honey cake, honey glazed chicken, tzimmes, and others. Or for a hipper audience, show how to make the high holidays cool – serve a gourmet menu using holiday-associated ingredients.

Practice Shofar Blowing

Host a pre-Rosh Hashanah Class for parents and/or kids with plenty of shofars. Kids are taught how to blow, what different sounds are. Older kids and/or parents can learn psbatim of different sounds and what they signify. Great combination of active and intellectual event.

High Holiday Drive

Find out what is needed in your community (canned food, toiletries, furniture etc.) By reaching out to the community and encouraging them to give to needy Jews, etc., you can get to know go-getters, work with (not in competition with) existing Jewish organizations, build a 'caring reputation', and help Jews in need.

The Online High Holidays Handbook

Your students may be interested in this online course. Jewish Interactive Studies offers a free online course that will enrich and elevate the Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur experience. Twenty-eight essays, arranged in four sections: Themes, Prayers, Laws and Customs. and Weekly Focus.

For information and to register: www.theHighHolidays.com.



Jewish Interactive Studies' courses feature:

- Convenient learning at your computer or to printout
- Exploring Jewish perspectives on a variety of subjects, based on English renditions of classical Jewish texts
- Structured courses in Jewish ethics, foundations of Judaism, Jewish holidays, prayer, and Torah studies
- Interactive e-mail correspondence with JIS' teaching staff to personalize the learning experience.

For information and to register: www.jewishstudies.org

MARKETING AND ADVERTISING

Marketing and advertising are key, as this is the first impression that you make – if you don't do it right, you won't get your target audience.

1. Start early and plan well. Firstly, if you are too late people will make other plans. People book seats early. Also, there is a lot to consider and arrange (see below), and you need to be sure that you have enough time to get everything done in the best and most efficient manner.
2. Set clear targets and use them to make your plans.
3. Advertisements should peak a person's interest. They should be eye and brain catching.
4. The person/people who answers the phone should be carefully chosen and well trained. The person should have a friendly, inviting, and upbeat voice. He/she should be keyed in to the cautions of the caller and have proper answers to any questions – he should feel like each call is a sales pitch, because it is – he shouldn't just give yes/no answers, but he should be full of accurate information and be eager to give over. It is also best not to have the information on an answering machine, as the caller may get the information and not ever call back. It is better if he calls back and you get him on the phone to give your sales pitch.
5. Tickets should be free, or very cheap. This can't be stressed enough. High holiday tickets in general are expensive and may deter someone from going somewhere else, but if yours are free or cheap, he'll come to you. Money should never be an issue. *Never* turn anyone away because of a lack of funds, for *any* occasion.

Print advertisements

Placing ads in the local community newspaper is the first avenue to attract new members.



Postcards

One way to attract interest is to send postcards to your mailing list. If it is a splurge, it may be the one time a year that it is worth it. The cards should be creative, colorful, and interesting, and should contain the necessary information to get someone to call. They should list all relevant, high-holidays centered programs.

If you have an email list, an email is useful as well, with a reminder email a week before.

Events

All events leading up to the high holidays should be viewed as opportunities to get people to attend services. Have flyers around for people to take with all relevant details and contact information, and talk about the services at all events.

NoMembershipRequired.com

NoMembershipRequired.Com, a project of Discovery Production, allows you to click on the city of your choice, and then the local (traditional) kiruv org appears with the place and details of its Yamim Noraim services.

REGISTRATION

All participants should be pre-registered, or else there will be no way of following up. This is an essential element, and part of why pre-planning is so important. Make sure to get the registrant's contact information when he is registering. If registration is available online, it should not be able to go through without relevant contact information.

WEB

Utilize your web site for advertising and information. You should have a very clear and correct detailing of the schedule of *all* events. You should have all contact info for registration and potentially generate the ability for people to sign up online. (This makes it easier and allows for some people who would otherwise not call to register, although some believe that all registration should be done over the phone. See above.) You should post relevant, high-holidays articles and links to other relevant web sites. Some can be found in the Ner Le'elef resources booklet and on the Ner Le'elef web site, and some are at the end of this booklet.



Machzorim

1) The Beginners Machzor

This is a customized, abbreviated *machzor*, based on the Artscroll transliterated *machzor* that is being published exclusively by AJOP. This *machzor* is ideal for use at beginner's services.

Contact, AJOP - 410-653-AJOP (2567)

2) The Artscroll Transliterated, Interlinear Machzor

The complete service, in Hebrew, English, and transliterated Hebrew line by line. Allows the congregant to follow along in either Hebrew or English.

Contact, Artscroll - 718-921-9000 in NY, 1-800-MESORAH outside of NY.

3) The Metsudah Interlinear Machzor

Contact, Israel Bookshop Publishing.

4) The Artscroll Hebrew/English Machzor

Artscroll offers a 15% discount for non-profit institutions.

Contact, Artscroll - 718-921-9000 in NY, 1-800-MESORAH outside of NY.

5) The Educational and Explanatory Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur Machzor

Contains transliterated and translated highlights of the major portions of the Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services. Filled with commentary, translation and instructions, this guide will help those of all backgrounds to better gain an understanding of the high holy days and be a source of inspiration and fulfillment.

http://afikimfoundation.org/donate/product_info.php?cPath=30&products_id=63

SERVICES

As stated above, this may be the only time of the year that many Jews remember their religion. They are coming to services anyway, so if you manage the opportunity properly, you can keep them coming back for other classes and programs. The services should be designed as a full program, with classes and activities. The minyan



should have the potential for relationship building, i.e. during the classes the speakers should develop a rapport with the audience, and at the end of the services the rabbis should approach the participants to speak with them.

Depending on the religious level and size of your congregation, it may be a good idea to offer both beginner and intermediate level services and classes. Part of it can be combined.

Some services work well when the lectures are interspersed with a brief davening – this works best when most of the congregation is real beginners who really aren't there for the davening. Actual services are minimized, and captivating discussions are intermingled amongst the prayers, keeping the participants interested in the whole program.

Prayers should be sung to emotional melodies, such as popular Carlebach tunes, and should be timed to an average pace. Too fast or slow, you lost them.

Location

There are many different places in which such services can be held. A synagogue is not always the best place for people who are intimidated to even walk through the doors of an Orthodox building. Other places may be a popular hotel, a JCC building or an interesting, but appropriate place. Preferably, the location itself should be attractive, though not to the degree that it compromises the sanctity of the day.

Mechitzah

Everyone should be able to see what's going on, and it shouldn't offend the women. (Speak to your posek about the best way to construct the mechitza.) All speakers should be easily viewable and audible to both the men and the women.

Classes

Many organizations run classes as an alternative to the services. Participants are invited to come in and out of the classes and the services - as things become too intense in one or the other place. The person giving the classes has to either daven Neitz, or ask a she'elah whether he can give classes starting from after the Tefilah Belachash of Shacharis and Musaf. Some separate classes geared specifically toward women are always a good idea. The page caller should remind the participants intermittently that the classes are available. The classes don't have to pertain to the high holidays, they could just as well be about the fundamentals of Judaism. We do not suggest classes during Maariv, Kol Nidrei and Neilah.

Guides/pamphlets

Neatly typed and organized pamphlets should be given out so that people can clearly follow what is happening. The pamphlets should provide an outline of the structure of the services as well as a listing of all available classes. Rabbis' names and pictures are a good addition so the audience members can identify who is who, as are some inspiring thoughts about the holiday.



Page caller

Someone should be calling out the page numbers so the participants don't feel lost. The page caller should briefly explain what is going to happen at each stage so the participants don't get confused. All instructions should be suggested, not commanded. The page caller can also insert some short inspiration about specific, meaningful prayers to enhance the mood. He should be visible and audible to both the men and the women.

Charts

Charts and signs should be posted in visible areas around the room indicating the sections of the services in an organized fashion, so participants have a visual aid to follow at all times.

Books

Intriguing books and articles should be set up for the participants in a spot that is easy to find. You may want to offer books along with the machzorim that are helpful to the services, such as the High Holidays Survival Kit and Pathways to Prayer for the High Holidays.

Usher

Someone friendly should be at the door during the service to greet latecomers and show them where to sit.

Kids / Babysitting

Plan an organized kids program for those old enough, and babysitting for babies and toddlers. This will allow the parents to focus solely on and gain maximum benefit from the services.

Meals

Meals offered on Rosh Hashanah should include a talk about the simanim. This can also be done at Kiddush during the day, when many congregants are present and listening. At communal meals there should be a lot of singing – it is a good idea to send tapes of the songs to key members beforehand so they can practice and pick up the tunes. You can also send participants to neighborhood families to get a warm, authentic holiday experience. There should be organized, communal pre- and post-Yom Kippur meals.

Tashlich

An organized tashlich trip is a worthwhile and meaningful experience.

Baal Teshuva for Yom Kippur

This program features a Yom Kippur retreat at a hotel where participants can observe Yom Kippur k'halacha. In general, many non-observant Jews will come to Yom Kippur services but will drive there. This program affords them the opportunity to be at services without having to violate the holiday. You serve only pre-fast and post-fast meals, which makes it less expensive than a typical holiday retreat. The further from



the local vicinity the better, as it makes it less likely that the participants will leave in the middle and more likely that they will stay for the whole fast.

Contact – Rabbi Yehuda Freilich, Yisraelink - Chicago – 847-982-Link (5465)

FOLLOW-UP

The most effective time to follow up with participants is the day after the event. Personal phone calls or emails are a must. Utilize the opportunity to invite them to new events, but don't overwhelm them. Focus on what you think would be the best event for each person and invite him/her to just that one (unless of course they ask about everything.)

Have materials handy at the services (flyers, postcards) ready for them to take home.

Have events planned in advance of the services to take place after each holiday so that you have what to invite them to. They should be interesting and should make the participant want to come back. Have several, different events to attract each type of person.

BOOKS TO HAVE AVAILABLE FOR STUDENTS/PARTICIPANTS

The Rosh Hashanah/Yom Kippur Survival Kit, Shimon Apisdorf, *Leviathan Press*

Pathways to Prayer - High Holidays, Rabbi Meir Birnbaum, *Mesorah Publishers*

Living Inspired, Akiva Tatz, *Feldheim*

Judaism in a Nutshell: God, Shimon Apisdorf, *Judaica Press*

Permission to Believe: Four Rational Approaches to G-d's Existence, Lawrence Kelemen, *Feldheim*

Permission to Receive: Four Rational Approaches to the Torah's Divine Origin, Lawrence Kelemen, *Feldheim*

Jewish Matters: A Pocketbook of Knowledge and Inspiration, *Targum/Feldheim*



ARTICLES ON THE WEB FOR THE HIGH HOLIDAYS

<http://www.torah.org/learning/yomtov/roshhashanah/>

Resources on Elul and Rosh Hashanah from Torah.org.

<http://torah.org/learning/yomtov/yomkippur/>

Divrei Torah on Yom Kippur from Torah.org.

<http://www.ou.org/chagim/roshhashannah/default.htm>

Resources on Rosh Hashanah from the OU.

<http://www.ou.org/chagim/yomkippur/default.htm>

Resources on Yom Kippur from the OU.

<http://oukosher.org/index.php/recipes/viewrecipes/C175/>

Holiday recipes from the OU.

<http://www.chabad.org/holidays/jewishnewyear/>

Elul-Tishrei holidays resources from Chabad.

http://www.aish.com/holidays/the_high_holidays/default.asp

Elul-Yom Kippur resources from aish.com



Appendix: Sample of Heritage House Yamim Noraim Schedules

Heritage House, The Jewish Student Information Center, Aish HaTorah and Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh welcome you to... **ROSH HASHANA PROGRAM 2004/5765**

WEDNESDAY, SEPTEMBER 15, 2004

- 2:30pm Hostels Open
6:09pm Candle Lighting
6:15pm Hostels Close and guests proceed with staff for evening services.
Please follow the signs to Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
6:25pm Welcome and Rosh Hashana evening overview with Rabbi Yaakov Marcus.
Evening service with commentary
7:30pm **Rosh Hashanah meal placements:** Please meet Rabbi Meir Schuster of the Heritage House and Jeff Seidel of the Student Information Center at Mens' Water Fountain near the Kotel
11:00pm Hostels reopen
12:00am **Sharp.** Hostels close for the night.

In deference to our neighbors,
PLEASE DO NOT CONGREGATE OUTSIDE THE HOSTELS AT ANY TIME.

THURSDAY, SEPTEMBER 16, 2004

- 6:30am Hostels open
6:45am Morning Services begin with Rabbi Avraham Edelstein at Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
7:15am Hostels Close and guests proceed with staff for services at Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
7:30am HaMelech (the King). Main part of the Rosh Hashana morning service (made user-friendly for our guests) with Rabbi Aaron Kampf.
8:05am Alternative Class with Rabbi Yaakov Marcus in the Upstairs Classroom
8:55am Torah Reading with Insights at Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
9:45am Kiddush
10:15am Shofar Blowing by Jeff Seidel
10:35am Mussaf with Rabbi Chaim Perlmutter .
11:25am Alternative Class with Rabbi Yaakov Marcus in the Upstairs Classroom
1:00pm Rosh Hashanah lunch placements Please meet Rabbi Meir Schuster and Jeff Seidel at Mens' Water Fountain near the Kotel.
4:00pm Hostels Reopen
4:30pm Tashlich with Moshe Mendlowitz – meet at Women's water Fountain near kotel.
6:00pm Class with Sholom Lewis at the Mens' Hostel. Light refreshments served
7:00pm Maariv Evening service at Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
7:30pm Rosh Hashanah meal placements. Please meet Rabbi Meir Schuster of the Heritage House and Jeff Seidel of the Student Information Center at the Mens' Water Fountain near the Kotel.
11:00pm Hostels reopen.
12:00am Sharp. Hostels close for the night.

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 17, 2004

- 6:30am Hostels open
6:45am Morning Services begin with Rabbi Avraham Edelstein at Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
7:15am Hostels Close and guests proceed with staff for services at Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
7:30am HaMelech (the King). Main part of the Rosh Hashana morning service (made user-friendly for our guests) with Rabbi Aaron Kampf.
8:05am Alternative Class with Rabbi Yaakov Marcus in the Upstairs Classroom
8:55am Torah Reading with Insights at Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
9:45am Kiddush



- 10:15am Shofar Blowing by Jeff Seidel
10:35am Mussaf with Rabbi Chaim Perlmutter .
11:25am Alternative Class with Rabbi Yaakov Marcus in the Upstairs Classroom
1:00pm Rosh Hashanah lunch placements Please meet Rabbi Meir Schuster and Jeff Seidel at Mens' Water Fountain near the Kotel
4:30pm Hostels Reopen
5:00pm Class with Eli Kaplin at the Mens' Hostel. Light refreshments will be served
6:00pm Womens' Hostel closes to join the Mens' Hostel for candle lighting.
6:05pm Candle lighting
6:15pm Hostels close and we proceed to the Kotel to welcome Shabbat.
7:20pm Dinner placements. Guests are invited to meet Jeff Seidel of the Student Information Center and Rabbi Meir Schuster of the Heritage House at the men's side of the water fountain at the Western wall.
11:00pm Hostels open for returning guests
12:00am "Sharp" Hostels Close
In deference to our neighbors, Please do not congregate outside the hostels at any time.

**Heritage House, The Jewish Student Information Center,
Aish HaTorah and Yeshivat Netiv Aryeh welcome you to...
YOM KIPPUR PROGRAM 2004/5765**

FRIDAY, SEPTEMBER 24, 2004

- 1:30 pm Hostels Open
3:00 pm Please join us for the Seudat HaMafseket- The final meal before the fast period. The meal will be served at the Heritage House Men's Hostel
4:30 pm Meal Room Closes
4:58 pm Candle Lighting in the Hostels
5:00 pm Hostels Close and guests proceed with staff for evening services. Please follow the signs to Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
5:00 pm Welcome and Yom Kippur evening overview with Rabbi Yaakov Marcus in the Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
5:15 pm Kol Nidrei with Rabbi Chaim Perlmutter
6:55 pm Questions and Answers with Rabbi Yaakov Marcus and Rabbi Avraham Edelstein in the Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
8:00 pm Hostels re-open
8:00 pm After Maariv- Optional Classes with Rabbi Yakkov Marcus in Upstairs Classroom.
11:00 pm "Sharp" Hostels Close
In deference to our neighbors, Please Do Not Congregate Outside The Hostels At Any Time.

SATURDAY, SEPTEMBER 25, 2004

- 6:30 am Hostels open
6:45 am Morning Services begin with Rabbi Avraham Edelstein at Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
7:15 am Hostels Close
7:30 am HaMelech (the King). Main part of the Yom Kippur morning service (made user-friendly for our guests) with Rabbi Aaron Kampf in the Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
8:30 am Alternative Class with Rabbi Yaakov Marcus in the Upstairs Classroom (wait for announcement)
10:00 am Torah Reading with Insights at Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
10:30 am Mussaf with Rabbi Chaim Perlmutter
11:15 am Alternative Class with Rabbi Yaakov Marcus in the Upstairs classroom (wait for announcement)
1:30 pm Hostels Re-open
1:30 pm Minchah Service in the Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room" with Rabbi Aaron Kampf
2:00 pm Alternative Class with Rabbi Yaakov Marcus in Upstairs Classroom (wait for announcement)
4:15 pm Hostels close
4:30 pm Neilah Service (the Closing of the Gate) with Rabbi Avraham Edelstein in the Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
6:10 pm The Blowing of the Shofar followed by Havdala, End of Fast.
(Light refreshments will be available following services) in the Aish HaTorah "Fleishig Dining Room"
6:30 pm Break-the-fast at Jeff Seidel's Jewish Student Information Center
7:00 pm Hostels Opens
12:00am SHARP! Hostels Close