



***MISHKAN HANEFESH* FAQ**

Philosophy of *Mishkan HaNefesh*

1. Why do we need a new *machzor*?

Gates of Repentance has served the Reform Movement well for many years. When it was first published in 1978, it represented exciting and progressive liturgical innovation. However, today it is beginning to feel dated. Congregations that use *Mishkan T'filah* are ready for a *machzor* that serves as a companion to the approach of the new siddur. The fact that it does not include transliteration is a stumbling block for many in our communities. So too, many of today's Jews feel disconnected from prayer and from theological and ideological concepts that do not seem consistent with a contemporary sensibility. Like *Mishkan T'filah*, *Mishkan HaNefesh* makes strides towards a multi-vocality that creates a space for all to inhabit, offering a multiplicity of different approaches. Through updated translations, elucidating essays, rich commentary, and a beautiful selection of poetry, *Mishkan HaNefesh* provides an environment for those of all backgrounds to find meaning in the High Holy Days.

2. Why should we switch to *Mishkan HaNefesh*?

Gates of Repentance was a wonderful innovation in its time. Incorporating more Hebrew and traditional liturgy allowed for a feeling of renewed tradition in the High Holy Days. Adding gender-neutral language addressed many of the contemporary needs of the Reform world. Today, our needs go beyond gender neutral language – the basic meaning of the holidays needs to be addressed and updated. *Mishkan HaNefesh* gives both the prayer leader and the community a wealth of resources for finding new meaning in these High Holy Days. Through updated translations, readings, and poetry, as well as easily accessible transliteration and new liturgical innovations, *Mishkan HaNefesh* breathes new life into High Holy Day services.

3. Many people in our community have strong emotional attachments to *Gates of Repentance*. How can we encourage the change?

Gates of Repentance will live on through the multi-vocality of *Mishkan HaNefesh*. Many of the readings and liturgical developments that first appeared in *Gates of Repentance* have found their way into *Mishkan HaNefesh*. By including these selections alongside new material, *Mishkan HaNefesh* allows for service leaders to design services by selecting from among different elements that will speak most strongly to their individual communities.



About *Mishkan HaNefesh*

1. How many volumes will *Mishkan HaNefesh* be?

Mishkan HaNefesh will be published as a two volume set – [with a gold cover for Rosh HaShanah and a silver one for Yom Kippur.](#)

2. Will there be other editions available?

A large print set is available for pre-order at this time. It is a three volume paperback set, created to be large enough for ease of reading but not too heavy to hold.

A pulpit edition for rabbis and cantors is also available for pre-order at this time. This set is two volumes, hard bound, and larger than the regular set.

3. Is there a digital version? Will there be an app?

A digital version will be available, and there will be an app as well. We are in the very early stages of exploring the best technology in order to provide the most authentic, accurate, and robust experience on digital devices. Stay tuned.

4. Will there be a Visual T'filah version of *Mishkan HaNefesh*?

Yes, there will be a Visual T'filah version of *Mishkan HaNefesh*; however, because of the complexity of converting a print book into a useable Visual T'filah, only selections of Visual T'filah of *Mishkan HaNefesh* will be ready in 2015.

5. Was *Mishkan HaNefesh* piloted?

From 2011 to 2014, over 300 congregations, as well as *chavurot*, Hillel groups, and day schools, participated in piloting opportunities. Feedback from these congregations continues to have a significant impact on *Mishkan HaNefesh*. This is a *machzor* made by the collective Reform Movement for the collective Reform Movement.



Ordering *Mishkan HaNefesh*

1. When will *Mishkan HaNefesh* be published?

Mishkan HaNefesh will be published in June 2015 so that it can be used for the High Holy Days in 2015.

2. Are there advance copies of *Mishkan HaNefesh* available?

There will be a limited number of advance bound copies of the books available in April 2015 for members of clergy teams to use in their High Holy Day planning. For orders of advance copies, please email us at machzor@ccarnet.org by March 31, 2015.

3. Is there a pre-publication draft of *Mishkan HaNefesh* available?

While a complete pre-publication draft of *Mishkan HaNefesh* is not available, we do offer sample booklets of draft sections from *Mishkan HaNefesh*. Please email machzor@ccarnet.org for information about how to acquire a sample draft booklet.

4. Is there a draft of *Mishkan HaNefesh* available online?

Mishkan HaNefesh will be viewable online starting in early March 2015. Though it will not be downloadable or printable, [sample pages are available](#).

5. When will I have the copies of *Mishkan HaNefesh* that I've already ordered?

You will have your regular copies of *Mishkan HaNefesh* by the end of June 2015 at the latest. Orders of the pulpit and large print editions will arrive in time for the High Holy Days 2015.

If you ordered pulpit or large print editions together with your regular copies, you will receive your regular copies by the end of June 2015, and you will receive your pulpit or large print copies by the High Holy Days 2015.

6. How much will *Mishkan HaNefesh* cost?

We offer significant pre-publication discounts. View the [Mishkan HaNefesh order form](#) for details.

7. How do I pre-order copies of *Mishkan HaNefesh*?

Please complete the [Mishkan HaNefesh order form](#) and send it to us by email, fax, or regular mail.

8. Will it be possible to have the books printed with customized dedications?



Unfortunately, that is not a financially feasible option. However, we will create a bookplate template for congregations to customize and print. The template will be available for download on ccarpres.org starting in March 2015.

The Content of *Mishkan HaNefesh*

1. Why are the translations in *Mishkan HaNefesh* different than those used in *Mishkan T'filah*?

The High Holy Days are unique, special days with their own themes and significance. Thus the translations for these days are also unique and highlight the special themes and mood of the High Holy Days. For more on the translation approach of *Mishkan HaNefesh*, see this [translation exercise](#).

2. Why is the Rosh HaShanah morning Shofar service different in *Mishkan HaNefesh* than it was in *Gates of Repentance*?

The rationale for splitting up the Shofar service into its three thematic sections is to increase the drama and uniqueness of these moments by weaving them throughout the service. Also, having the three separate sections provides an opportunity for focusing on each of the three unique themes, without having to rush through them, allowing these important central motifs to infuse the service. Separated in this way, the Shofar sections become points of focus during the Rosh HaShanah service, and serve as a beautiful passageways throughout the morning liturgy. Because the Shofar service is traditionally part of *musaf*, which is not included in Reform liturgy, the current placement in *Gates of Repentance* is already a Reform innovation.

3. What Torah readings will be included in *Mishkan HaNefesh*?

There will be several options available for each service, including familiar options from *Gates of Repentance* and some new options.

Some of the Torah readings will be included within the service, and some will be included in the back of the volume as alternative options. For the Yom Kippur volume, it will be possible to choose which reading to do in the morning and which in the afternoon. See [here](#) for more specific information about the Torah readings.

4. There is a lot of material in each service. How can we create meaningful experiences while keeping the timing realistic?



Service leaders have to choose how to best shape the service for their specific communities. This applies to the choices of readings, as well as music. We are in the process of creating a collection of sample outlines of different services from clergy teams which will be helpful in thinking about how to make these kinds of choices.

We also encourage clergy teams to sign up for *Havah T'filah*, the in-person seminar we will be holding in partnership with the ACC May 4-5, 2015, which will focus on best practices for leading services from *Mishkan HaNefesh*.

5. There is a lot of material on each page and on each spread. Will people get distracted?

The editors of *Mishkan HaNefesh* accepted as a given that not everyone will follow the exact path set by the leader. Some people may be moved by a particular reading and linger on that page. Some may become interested in a section of sublinear commentary, or inspired by a meditation, and wind up moving through the service at their own pace. We encourage that kind of personal engagement with the material in *Mishkan HaNefesh*, and hope that everyone will find something within the covers of the prayerbook that will pique their curiosity or stir their soul. Participants are encouraged to discover personal connections within *Mishkan HaNefesh* by exploring the texts on their own.

6. What is included in the Yom Kippur *Minchah* service?

This service is primarily the Yom Kippur afternoon Torah service. It focuses on the concept of *midot* as an organizing principle for study and reflection, using seven *midot* or ethical qualities. The service does not include *Avodah* or *Yizkor*, which appear in the *machzor* as separate rubrics.

7. What is unique about the *Avodah* service?

This service asks the question: what does *Avodah* mean to us today? What are the enduring connections that can be found through *Avodah*? Through the use of texts, readings, and liturgy, participants are encouraged to reflect on our hunger for the spiritual, our ability to continue to grow and develop, our expressions of gratitude, our confessions of sins, and our preparation to begin again.

8. What is unique about the *Yizkor* service?

The *Yizkor* service in *Mishkan HaNefesh* uses poetry as a way to approach grief. This *Yizkor* service offers options for silent, individual reflection; for music and song; for shared congregational prayer; and for individual voices. This service references many forms of grief and many kinds of relationships. Individuals are encouraged to find their own way through the experience of memory and loss even as the leader serves as a caring guide.

9. Will Shabbat insertions be included?



Yes, Shabbat insertions will be clearly indicated where relevant.

10. How does *Mishkan HaNefesh* direct ritual choreography?

Different communities have different traditions regarding when to stand, when to sit, and when to read responsively. *Mishkan HaNefesh* has left these options open to each community to decide on their own. Following in the tradition of *Mishkan T'filah*, *Mishkan HaNefesh* invites communities to take ownership over their services in new ways and does not indicate when to stand or sit.

Also like *Mishkan T'filah*, *Mishkan HaNefesh* does not use italics to indicate responsive readings. Many readings, however, are designed to offer responsive reading as an option by providing indented paragraphing between segments.

The Design of *Mishkan HaNefesh*

1. Why do some pages have a background “wash” of light blue? And why are some gray?

The Editors of *Mishkan HaNefesh* wanted to find a direct way within the design structure to convey the message that there are different kinds of material throughout the *machzor*. Prayers or readings without the “wash” are the primary liturgical material (*matbei-ah t'filah*), whereas the readings with the colored background are alternative options or counter-texts.

The gray pages are introductory or supplementary study material. The material on these gray pages is not necessarily meant to be read aloud but provide opportunities for personal study or meditation before certain significant liturgical moments, like *Un'taneh Tokef*. The service leader(s) can decide how or whether to use these pages.

2. Are all prayers arranged as two-page spreads?

Some pages, like the introductory Psalms in the morning services, are linear and are meant to be used one after the other. The absence in some cases of “wash” pages of blue or gray, as referenced above, help indicate that these pages are meant to be linear.

It is important to note that the *Yizkor*, *Avodah*, and *Eileh Ezkarah* services are designed as completely linear services, though they still contain choices about what to read. The



expectation is that the service leader will make judicious choices about what to include and how to shape the service.



Further Study Resources

1. Are there any other resources available for further study?

We are in the process of developing an adult learning series to be used to introduce communities to *Mishkan HaNefesh* and its unique features. It will be linked here once it is available.

In addition, CCAR Press publishes two study resources that provide material for group or individual study on themes related to the *machzor*: [Machzor: Challenge and Change, Volume 1](#), and [Machzor: Challenge and Change, Volume 2](#).

We also recommend subscribing to the [CCAR blog, RavBlog.org](#), which features occasional blogs related to the *machzor*. Many of these blogs would be useful in creating sermons or lessons about *Mishkan HaNefesh*, and can be found by searching the RavBlog archive.

We encourage clergy teams to sign up for *Havah T'filah*, the in-person seminar that will be held in partnership with the ACC in New York, May 4-5, 2015. This seminar, will focus on best practices for leading services from *Mishkan HaNefesh*.

Contact Information

1. Additional questions about *Mishkan HaNefesh*?

Contact us at machzor@ccarnet.org or 212-912-3636 x243