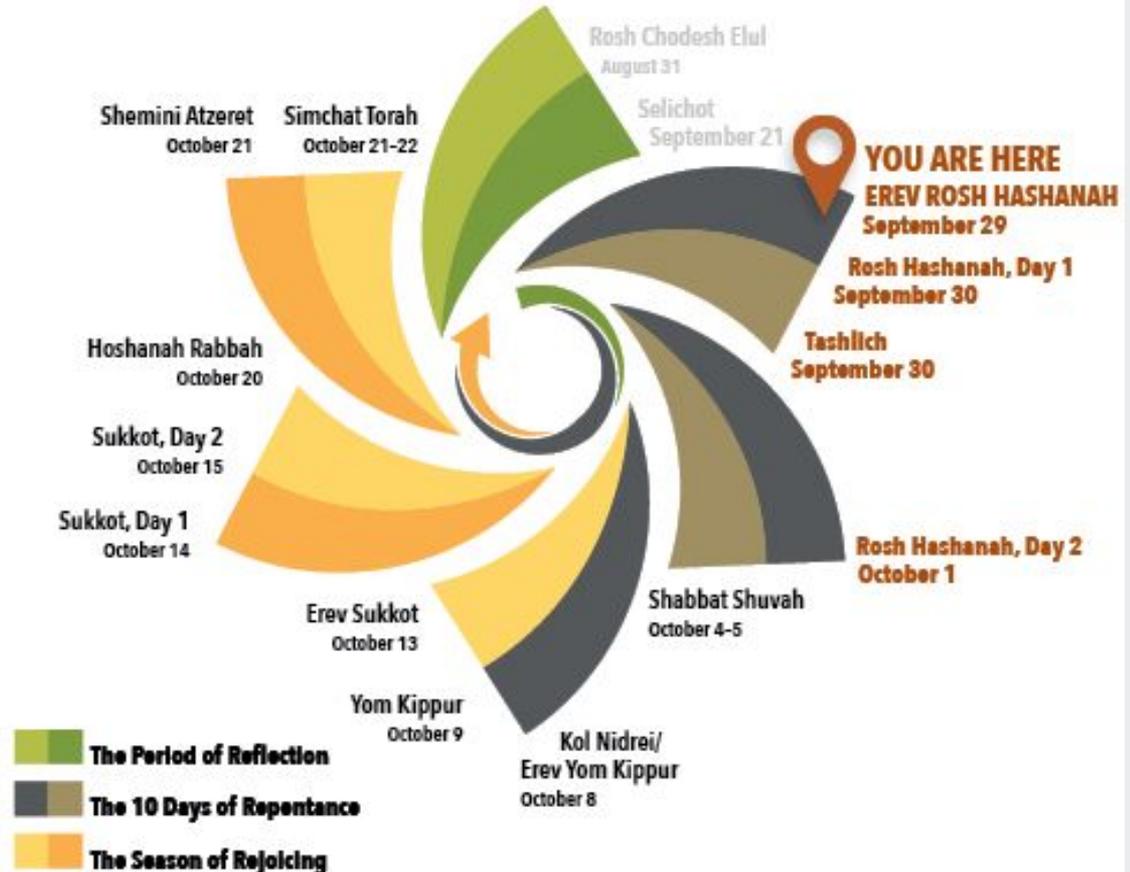


You Are Here

Find Yourself During the High Holiday Season

Rabbi Jesse Olitzky &
Rabbi Rachel Marder



Congregation Beth El

We are a dynamic, egalitarian Conservative synagogue of roughly 380 households in South Orange, NJ with a strong commitment to inspiring learning, engaging worship, and pursuit of social justice. We welcome people of all ages, genders, and backgrounds to join us on our journey: learned and novice; born-Jewish, Jew-by-choice, or non-Jew living Jewish; single or partnered; gay or straight. Our intent is that all who enter find a *makom kadosh* — a holy space — in which to seek God, connection, and community.





What Motivated You Are Here

- Desire for personal, connective, not logistical material
- Spiritual GPS
- Music (learn tunes, inspire)
- Gift to foster each member's spiritual growth



You Are Here

The High Holidays are a sacred time on the Jewish calendar for intense personal reflection and spiritual growth. Our weekly email series, **YOU ARE HERE**, is designed to help make this time personally meaningful. Look for an email from Beth EI every Friday through October 18 with a video teaching from our clergy, a personal reflection from a Beth EI member, liturgical music, and High Holiday programming details. May this be a season of growth, renewal, and reflection for you. **Shana Tovah!**



YOU ARE HERE

WHO: Three lay leaders: One pitched the idea, edited content and formatted emails. Another who is a graphic designer created the logo. Third leader posted content to website. One clergy found contributors and managed project.

WHAT: Eight themed emails to spiritually, not logistically, connect to the season. **Components:** 3-minute video drash from clergy, a 200-ish word reflection from a member, relevant prayer/song with lyrics, links to sermons, occasional programming, service times.

WHEN: Every Friday morning from Rosh Hodesh Elul until Simchat Torah

WHERE: Your inbox, synagogue Facebook page

WHY: The HHD season is overwhelming. We wanted to orient people and take them on a personal, spiritual journey to digest the holidays and reflect on themes of the season



Timeline

- 6-8 weeks ahead: Invite diverse range of members to write personal reflections
- Week ahead: Mail out postcard with graphic to arrive several days before Rosh Hodesh Elul (1st email)
- Follow up contributors
- Save time to edit the personal reflection
- Send email out each Friday for 8 weeks at same time. Format to make it attractive, experiment with subject lines
- Post content to social media and web site
- Each week check the open and click rates



Samples of You Are Here

<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/-You-Are-Here---1--Rosh-Chodesh-Elul.html?soid=1102382265800&aid=7dJhx2NdFC4>

<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/-You-Are-Here-5780---2--Forgiving-Each-Other--Forgiving-Ourselves.html?soid=1102382265800&aid=Ni7h5ZN7CK0>

https://myemail.constantcontact.com/-You-Are-Here-5780---3--Remembering-9-11--Preparing-for-a-new-year.html?soid=1102382265800&aid=sl-j_6rnn1E

https://myemail.constantcontact.com/-You-Are-Here-5780---4--Rabbi-Olitzky-on-Selichot.html?soid=1102382265800&aid=Db_DT-GGLSU

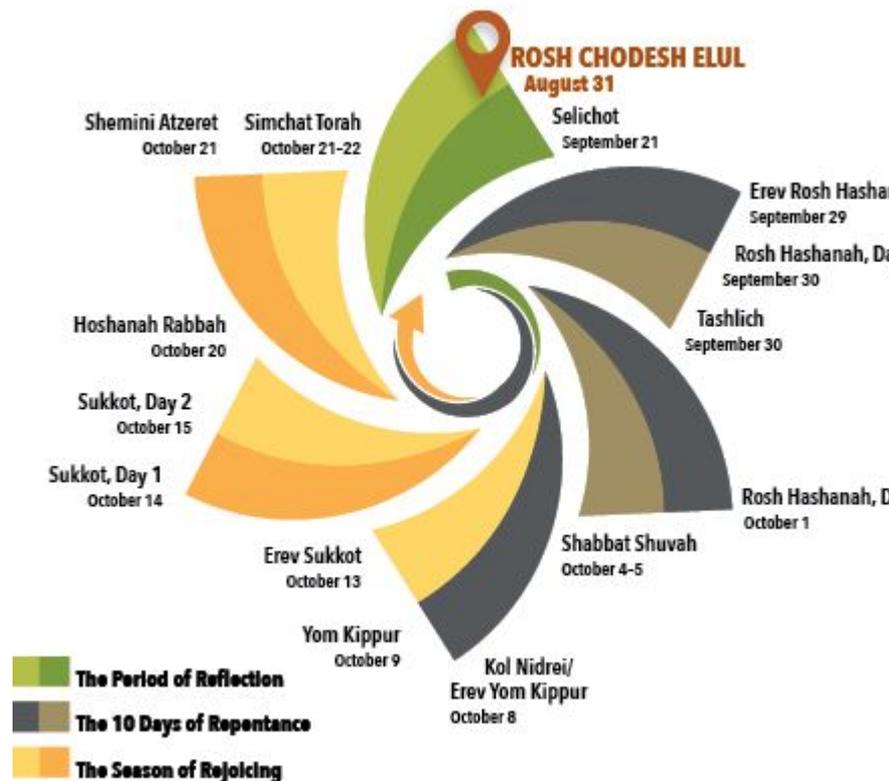
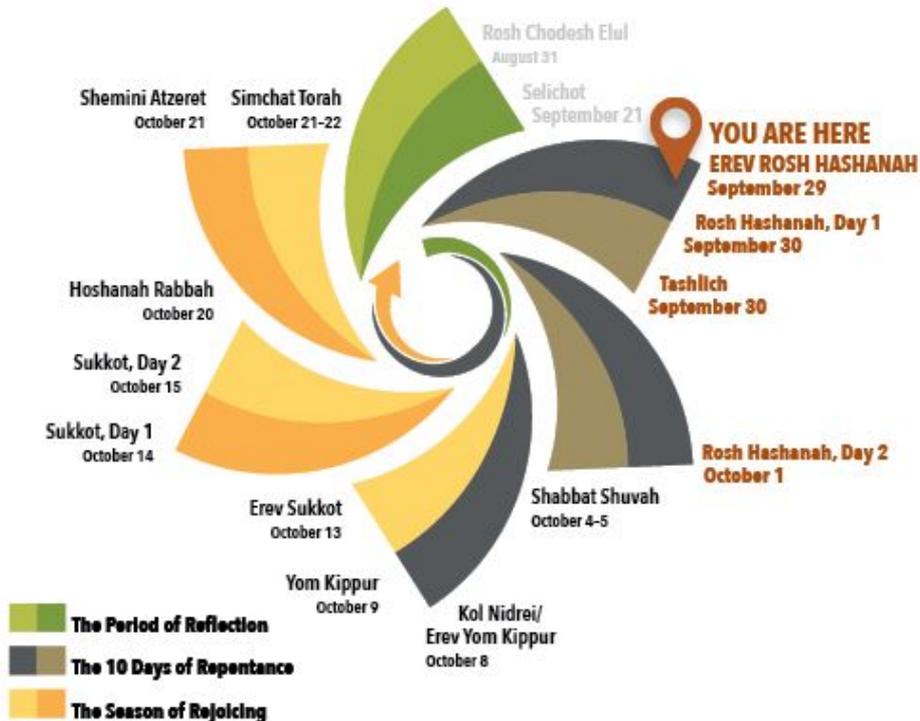
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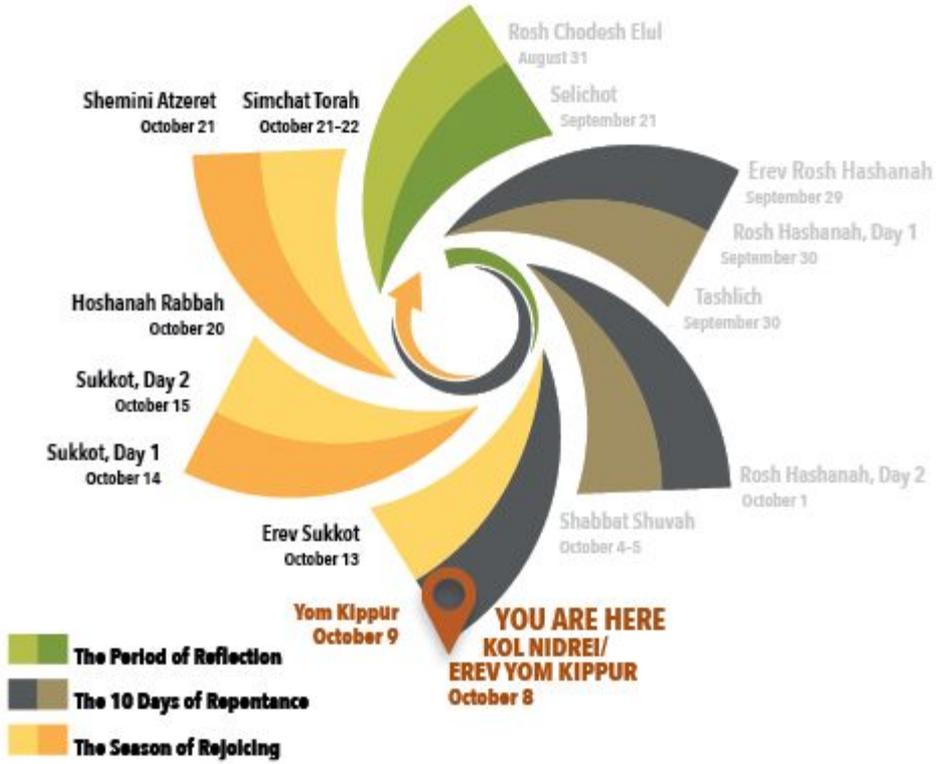
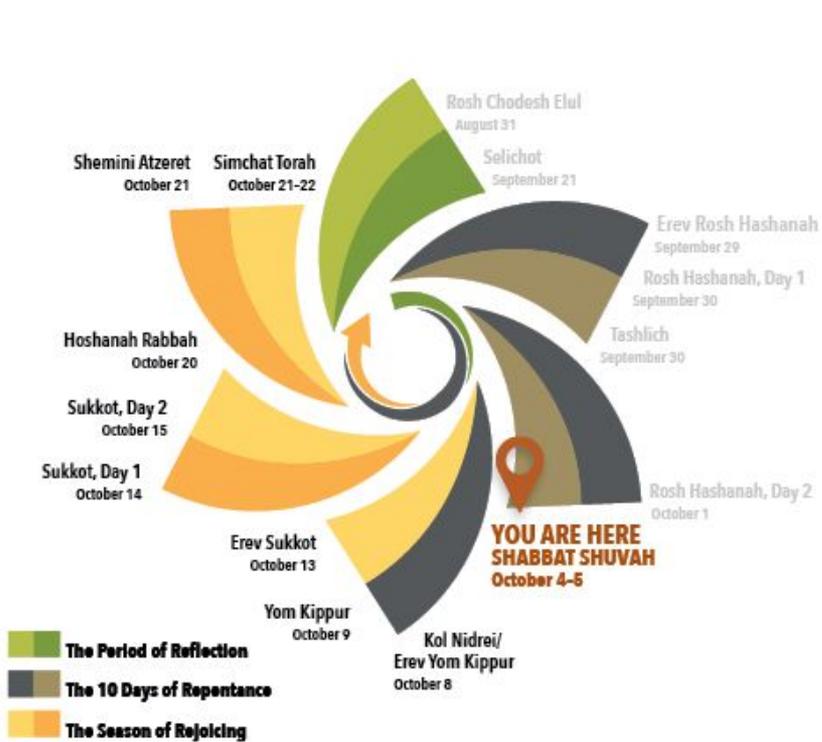


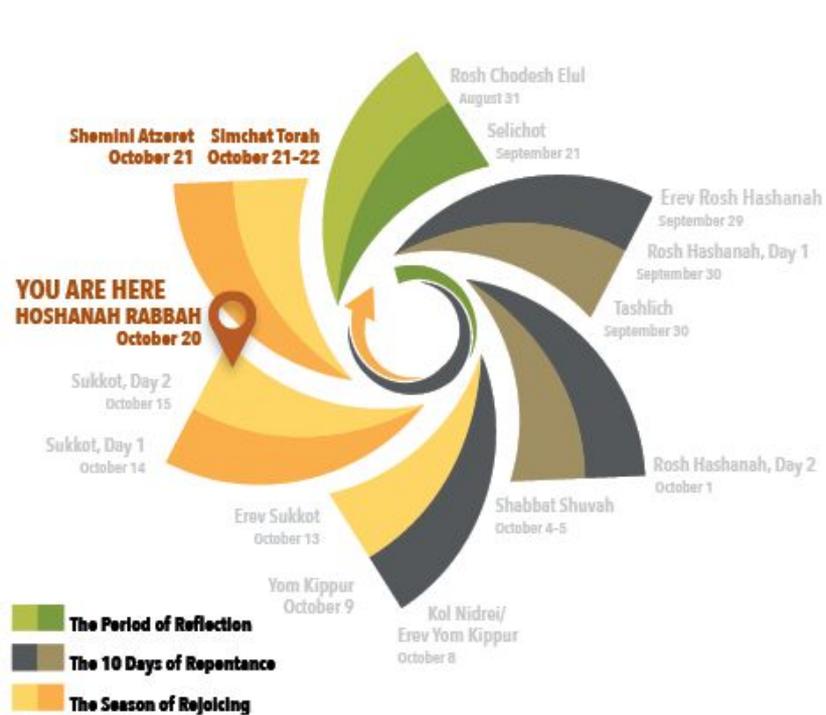
More Samples of You Are Here Emails

<https://myemail.constantcontact.com/-You-Are-Here-5780---6--Rabbi-Olitzky---Preparing-for-Yom-Kippur.html?soid=1102382265800&aid=gVnEkl29os>

https://myemail.constantcontact.com/-You-Are-Here-5780---7--Rabbi-Marder-on-Sukkot.html?soid=1102382265800&aid=PF_H223syuE









Findings

- Click and open rate were excellent. Most opened email day they received it.
- Rabbis content was the most popular, followed by music, and then the contributors. But there was also an information-seeking behavior, shown via click throughs to service times and program info.
- The emails can serve as good, timely reminders for logistics, if done so that those logistics don't overwhelm the content.
- How do we build on You Are Here? Generated ideas -- can we do something like this for yartzeit? Chanukah related?



Clicks

29 Av (Rosh Hodesh Elul): 96
(Roughly 30% of congregation)

6 Elul: 88

13 Elul: 77

20 Elul (Selichot): 70

Click Through Rate

20%

18%

18%

15%



Open Rate

27 Elul (Rosh Hashanah): 93

5 Tishrei (Yom Kippur): 92

12 Tishrei (Sukkot): 61

19 Tishrei (Simchat Torah): 41

Click Through Rate

20%

20%

14%

10%

Total Views: 689

AVD: 2:20

Views

Average View Duration

164

2:24

108

2:38

103

1:28

76

2:29

65

2:39

60

1:54

56

3:01

49

2:45



Try This at Home! Tips to Keep in Mind

- This is a gift for members to create communal intention for season (received feedback, hung postcard on refrigerator)
- Tailor communication to your community (length, content, medium)
- Subject lines -Utilize social media
- Touch head + heart
- Volunteer opportunities



Try This At Home!

- Postcard design, hanging on refrigerator, built excitement
- Tailor content to your community needs
- Rabbinic content most popular
- Email out at 7:40 am
- The videos should be kept to 2.5 minutes at the most. Caption the videos to boost the views.
- Opportunity to build community (personal reflections)
- Strive for gender balance, include multiple demographics. This is for everyone.



Special Considerations for Pandemic

- Help people prepare for HHDs
- New themes: Loss, disappointment, cultivating flexibility, patience
- Keeping track of time
- Content should take people on an intentional journey
- Videos? Podcast?
- What does our community need? Connection, reassurance