

The Maggid Sept 2026

Congregation Etz Chaim

P O Box 3752
Merced CA 95344



Notes from Student Rabbi Joy Plummer

We refer to God as lover often in Jewish texts, from Psalms and Song of Songs in our Tanach, to L'cha Dodi and Y'did Nefesh, both written in the 16th century. Y'did Nefesh is the starting prayer of services during the month of Elul, the month preceding Rosh Hashanah. It is attributed to Rabbi Elazar ben Moshe Azikri. The prayer is a love song to the Eternal, beginning with the words "my soul's Beloved, Parent/Father of Compassion." Each of the original four stanzas of the prayer begin with a letter spelling out the tetragrammaton, in Hebrew known as יהוה - yud hay vav hay.

The month of Elul is itself an acronym referring to Song of Songs 6:3 - אני לדודי ודודי לי - meaning "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine" - אלול. Elul is a time of introspection. When we look inside ourselves to see how we missed our mark this past year, let us remember that God is right there with us, deep in our nefesh, in our soul, loving us, waiting to receive our love, waiting for us to return to ourselves with a clean slate.

For your reading pleasure, from Mishkan HaLev, the Reform prayerbook for Selichot and the month of Elul, the beautiful poem, Y'did Nefesh:

My soul's Beloved, Source of compassion -

Into Your embrace draw this one who longs to serve You.

Like a deer I would leap and run

To do Your will - to kneel in awe before You.

Sweeter than honey from the comb is Your love,

Sweeter by far than any taste.

Reveal Yourself, my Beloved:

Keep me safe in Your shelter of peace.

Enlighten the earth with Your glory;

With You we shall rejoice and be glad.

Hurry, Beloved, the hour has come!

Show us Your love, as You did long ago.

President's Message from Rich Kleitman

The High Holidays are upon us. Our chance to spend time looking inward to review our actions over the last year and rectify our errors and seek atonement. This process of self-reflection is not easy but is at the core of self-improvement. I hope to see many of you at our services. The flyer showing dates and times is on page 3 of this newsletter; and the Yizkor Card below can be printed, filled out and returned to me or mailed to our PO Box (Congregation Etz Chaim, PO Box 3752, Merced CA 95344.) We will have Yizkor Cards available at Rosh Hashanah Services as well.

We are thrilled to have met Student Rabbi Joy Plummer. She is an incredibly great fit for our congregation. Raised in Fresno, her energy and experience are perfect for our group. The High Holidays are a perfect time to come and learn from her.

Sukkot is right around the corner after Yom Kippur so come and be a builder and enjoy a chance to meet and eat under the blue sky and stars.

B'Shalom,
Rich Kleitman



*Remembering is
a message from the heart
a message from
the heart*



IN MEMORIAM



PLEASE INCLUDE THE NAME(S) OF MY
DEPARTED LOVED ONES DURING YIZKOR/MEMORIAL SERVICE

IN LOVING MEMORY OF
(please print phonetically)

A YIZKOR/MEMORIAL CONTRIBUTION TO CONGREGATION ETZ CHAIM IS ENCLOSED

NAME

ADDRESS

PHONE

High Holy Days Services 2026/5787

Congregation Etz Chaim

Fireside Room, United Methodist Church

899 Yosemite Parkway, Merced **

LED BY STUDENT RABBI JOY PLUMMER

ROSH HASHANAH

FRIDAY
SEPTEMBER 11

7:00 p.m.

Evening Service

SATURDAY
SEPTEMBER 12

10:00 a.m.

Morning Torah Service
followed by a no host luncheon
with the Student Rabbi at 510 Bistro,
followed by a Tashlich Service
on the Bridge at Rahilly Park

YOM KIPPUR

SUNDAY
SEPTEMBER 20

7:00 p.m.

Kol Nidre Service

MONDAY
SEPTEMBER 21

10:00 a.m.

Morning Torah Service

1:00 p.m.

Healing Service

2:00 p.m.

Open Discussion

4:00 p.m.

Lesson

5:30 p.m.

Yizkor (Memorial Service)

6:30 p.m.

Neila (Closing Service)

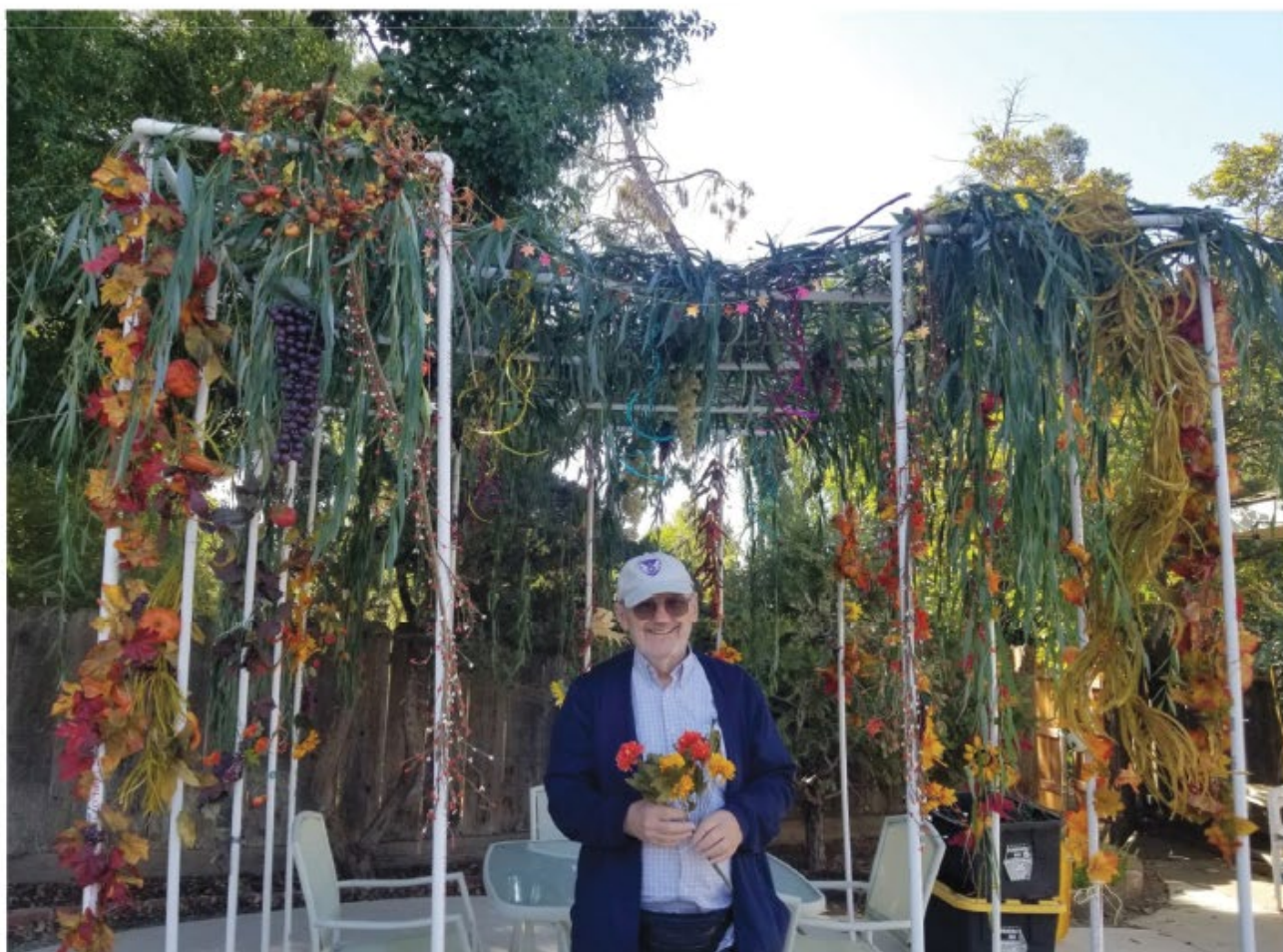
7:30 p.m.

Havdalah, Kiddush and
Break-the-Fast Potluck

- It is traditional at this time of year to make donations in memory of loved ones. Please fill out a **Yizkor Card**. You may mail your card and donation to P.O. Box 3752, Merced 95344-3752 or give to Rachel Hadley or Rich Kleitman no later than Kol Nidre. Other donations will also be gratefully accepted throughout the High Holy Days.
** Please contact Greg Friedman for ZOOM link information
*** For our **Break-the-Fast**, please bring a main dish, and either a side dish or dessert - enough to feed your group heartily (these people will be hungry!)
- Tzedakah (food or clothing) for the less privileged in our community is welcome at any service



It's time for Sukkah Building!



Saturday, September 26th!

9:00am: Sukkah Building

Bagels & cream cheese provided!

Bring creativity!

5:30pm: Sukkot Potluck

Bring food!

All will be on the Chavurah House Patio

RSVP to Rich Kleitman at erkarkdad@gmail.com by Sept 20th.



Student Rabbi Joy's Scheduled Weekend Visits

Other weekend activities will be posted as their schedule is determined

Hebrew Year 5787	Holiday/Description	Location	Time
Friday, August 28, 2026	Selichot	Chavurah House	7:00
Fri and Sat, Sept 11 & 12	Rosh Hashana	UMC Fireside Room	
Sun and Mon, Sept 20 & 21	Yom Kippur	UMC Fireside Room	
Friday, October 2, 2026	Simchat Torah Services	Chavurah House	7:00
Friday, November 20, 2026	Formal Services	Chavurah House	7:00
Friday, December 11, 2026	Formal Services	Chavurah House	7:00
Saturday, December 12, 2026	Chanukah Party	Sheryl's House	5:30
Friday, January 22, 2027	Formal Services	Chavurah House	7:00
Saturday, January 23, 2027	Tu B'Shvat Seder/ Potluck	Chavurah House	5:30
Friday, February 19, 2027	Formal Services	Chavurah House	7:00
Friday, March 19, 2027	Formal Services	Chavurah House	7:00
Saturday, March 20, 2027	Purim Party	Chavurah House	7:00
Friday, April 23, 2027	Formal Services	Chavurah House	7:00
Saturday, April 24, 2027	Community Seder	Chavurah House	5:30
Friday, May 14, 2027	Formal Services	Chavurah House	7:00

Please sign up to host the Rabbi and/or an Oneg

Hosting the Rabbi for dinner is a treat;
Hosting the Oneg Shabbat is an honor.

Please Volunteer to host the Rabbi
and / or host an Oneg

Weekend Visits	Oneg Host	Friday Dinner Host	Saturday Dinner Host
1 August 28 - 30	Rachel Hadley	Rich Kleitman and Carol Madruga	John and Judith
2 September 11 - 12	The Board	Carol Madruga and Rich Kleitman	---
3 September 20 - 21	No Oneg	Sheryl and Ardene	Break the Fast Potluck
4 October 2 - 4	Belinda and Kathy	John Kiriara	Potluck dinner then Adult Ed
5 November 20 - 22	Carol F, Ardene and Sheryl	Belinda and Kathy	Greg Friedman
6 December 11 - 13	Ardene, Susannah	Karen Fultz	Chanukah Party
7 January 22 - 24	Carol Madruga		Tu B'Shvat Seder
8 February 19 - 21			
9 March 19 - 21			Potluck dinner then Purim Party
10 April 23 - 25			Community Seder
11 May 14 - 16			
Approved changed dates			

Dinner with the Rabbi can be at your home, or taking her out to dinner – leaving adequate time for her to get to our Chavurah House in time.

***Please let Ardene (qwestie@aol.com) - (209) 631-5898)
or Sheryl (wightsheryl@sbcglobal.net) know you would
like to host the Rabbi for dinner***

Hosting the Oneg entails bringing desserts/ treats for
the Congregation to enjoy after the Kabbalat Shabbat Service

***This URL: <https://tinyurl.com/Etz-Chaim-Oneg>
Will take you to a form to sign up to host an Oneg***

Puzzle Page Sudoku

			9	7	2			
2	9	8				4	3	7
		9	3	4	1	6		
	4		7		6		1	
	6		2		3		5	
	3		1		8		4	
	5						8	

**Monthly 6:30 Potluck and 7:30 Lay Led Kabbalat Shabbat Services
at our Chavurah House on Parsons Ave
will resume in October**

2026/ 2027 Annual Dues are DUE

*Our Fiscal Year is July - June
\$500.00 per Year per Family Unit
Please mail your 2026/ 2027 Dues payment to:
Congregation Etz Chaim
P O Box 3752
Merced CA 95344*

For those who prefer, we do accept monthly Dues payments year round

More Beautiful than Before...



*Please send your tributes to:
Congregation Etz Chaim, P O Box 3752, Merced, CA 95344*

Congregation Etz Chaim gratefully acknowledges the following tributes:

Sarajane Victor in loving memory of her husband Marty Victor

Rachel Hadley in loving memory of her grandfather Fred Moore

May their memories be a blessing זכרונם לברכה

Belinda Braunstein in honor of Henry Fultz for setting a new AAU World Record for his age and weight group – combined deadlift and bench press.



September Yahrzeits

Norman Ambrosini
 Henry Bernstein
 Harry Friedberg
 Leon Ginsberg
 Barbara Goldman
 Lee Kamson
 Gerald Kaplan
 Judith Goodstein Kleitman
 Mel Kramer
 Alexander Labbok
 Fred Moore
 Phillip Pansky
 Morton N. Rosenbaum
 Ann Rotbart
 Samuel Salzberg
 Marty Victor
 Steve Wight

Birthdays

Judith Salzberg Kiriara 9/1
 Alicia Ambrosini 9/5
 Peggy Shainberg 9/6
 Belinda Braunstein 9/16
 Carol Madruga 9/17

In the year of their passing

Mary Kaplan (01- 2026)

זכרונם לברכה

May their memories be a blessing

Sudoku Solution

4	1	3	9	7	2	5	6	8
2	9	8	6	1	5	4	3	7
5	7	6	8	3	4	1	9	2
7	8	9	3	4	1	6	2	5
6	2	1	5	8	9	3	7	4
3	4	5	7	2	6	8	1	9
8	6	4	2	9	3	7	5	1
9	3	7	1	5	8	2	4	6
1	5	2	4	6	7	9	8	3