

# HUMANISTIC JUDAISM: A COMMUNITY CELEBRATION OF SHABBAT

## WELCOMING THE SHABBAT

Shabbat Shalom. We gather on this Shabbat as a community of believers. We believe that Judaism is the entire experience of the Jewish people. We believe in the value of celebrating Jewish culture and identity. We believe that all those who choose to celebrate with us are part of our community. We believe that being together strengthens and enhances our Humanistic Jewish experience. May this Sabbath be a time of peace and rejuvenation.

This is a time of transition. We move from our everyday week to the experience of Shabbat. We turn from the concerns of the outside world and become quiet and peaceful. We, at this moment, in this time, create a community of Humanistic Jewish believers. Let us pause and take note as we begin the journey of this Shabbat.

*Rabbi Miriam Jerris*

## SONG: SHABBAT SHALOM

### CANDLES

The Sabbath candles stand before us as did the lamps of our ancestors. We connect from their generation to our generation. As in each generation before us, we participate in this ancient ritual and make our contribution to the traditions of the Jewish people. As the daylight disappears, we light these candles to bring light to this gathering.

*Rabbi Miriam Jerris*



*(light the candles)*

BARUKH HAOR BAOLAM

בְּרוּךְ הָאֹר בְּעוֹלָם

BARUKH HAOR BAADAM

בְּרוּךְ הָאֹר בְּאָדָם

BARUKH HAOR BASHABBAT

בְּרוּךְ הָאֹר בַּשַּׁבָּת

*Radiant is the light in the world  
Radiant is the light within people  
Radiant is the light of Shabbat*

*Rabbi Sherwin Wine*



## WINE

We raise this cup of wine mindful of all it took for us to receive it. We appreciate the sun and the rain, gifts of nature. We value the efforts of our fellow human beings, aware of the human sacrifice involved. We know that the wine exists only because of the luck of the right amount of each element combined with human effort. We are thankful for the endeavors of all human beings working responsibly with the natural environment to bring forth this wine.

*Rabbi Miriam Jerris*

B'RUKHEEM HAADAMA

בְּרוּכִים הָאָדָמָה

HASHEMESH, V'HAGESHEM

הַשֶּׁמֶשׁ וְהַגֶּשֶׁם

ASHER YOTZRIM P'REE HAGAFEN

אֲשֶׁר יוֹצְרִים פְּרֵי הַגָּפֶן

*We rejoice in the earth, the sun, and the rain, which produces the fruit of the vine.*

*Humanistic Judaism*

## HALLA

Bread represents the basic needs of life. We share this bread today to symbolize our desire to share our time, talents, and resources to enhance our Humanistic Jewish identity and improve the world. As the fingers of the braided halla intertwine, so may our hearts, minds, and sense of responsibility reach out to intertwine with all those working together toward a common sense of purpose.

May the sharing of this bread strengthen the bonds between those of us committed to the future of Humanistic Judaism and all those with whom we share this earth.

*Rabbi Miriam Jerris*



## BLESSING OVER THE BREAD

B'RUKHEEM HAMOTSEE'EEM LEHEM  
MEEN HAARETS

בְּרוּכִים הַמוֹצְאִים לֶחֶם מִן הָאָרֶץ

*Blessed are those who bring forth bread from the earth*

*Rabbi Sherwin Wine*

## SH'MA YISRAEL – HEAR O ISRAEL

Jewish literature recounts how Moses stood before the people for the very last time. “Sh’ma Yisrael – Hear O Israel,” he said, as he declared a belief system for ancient Israel. Our Rabbis later introduced its daily recitation as a confession of faith and acceptance of the “burden of the kingdom of the heavens.”

*As Humanistic Jews, we no longer turn to ancient theologies. Yet we too bear burdens.*

We bear the burden of accepting responsibility for the improvement of the world.

*We accept that the people of Israel must always take upon ourselves our share of the responsibility for tikkun olam – repair of the world.*

And so we, too, recite this poetic interpretation of the Sh’ma Yisrael as we call upon all of the House of Israel to accept its part in creating a better future for all people.

שְׁמַע יִשְׂרָאֵל נִיטוֹל אֶת חֶלְקֵינוּ בְּתִיקוּן עוֹלָם

*Sh'ma Yisra'el nitol et helkeinu b'tikkun olam.*

*Hear O Israel: Let us take up our portion in the repair of the world.*

*Rabbi Jeffrey Falick*

## THE TORCHBEARERS

### **Congregation:**

*At one with our forbears, we affirm that righteousness and enlightenment shall be our torch.*

*We shall teach these values diligently to our children all the days of our lives.*

*We shall endeavor to live by these values in the comfort of our own homes or on cold and windswept roads.*

*Whether adversity bows our heads or fulfillment makes our spirits soar,*

*Our hands shall mete out justice to all and our eyes shall be open to the light of truth.*

*We shall emblazon our paths through life with this light, as a beacon for all humankind!*

*Rabbi Eva Goldfinger*

## CONNECTION

When we are born, we experience a sense of aloneness that never leaves us. As we grow up, as we become more and more aware of our own uniqueness, this feeling of apartness grows stronger and fills our hearts with a need for connecting.

There are many ways to connect. There are many paths to belonging. Most men and women find each other and love each other and choose the commitment of marriage. Strangers meet strangers and discover that they can be good friends. Parents have children and nurture them with tender care. Clans and tribes, nations and peoples, embrace their members and give them the security of identity and roots.

Belonging is an experience of transcendence, an experience of being a part of something greater than oneself. It starts with the human bonds of family and reaches out to wider horizons. There are times when we feel we belong to the universe itself – to the evolutionary drama of life, to the very stars and beyond.

*Rabbi Sherwin Wine*

## SONG: HAVA NAGEELA

*Traditional Folk Song*



## A WORLD WIDE COMMUNITY

Humanistic Judaism is an innovative philosophy in Jewish life. Many of us were drawn to its honesty, its boldness, its openness, and its creativity. The philosophy brought us to our congregation, but it is our quest for community that compels us to stay. We want to associate with others who share our vision -- our view of Jewish identity. We want to share our ideas and feel the warmth of their acceptance.

The opportunity for communal acceptance is greater than what we receive from our local congregation. There are Jews who live outside of our area who share our Jewish outlook. They are Humanistic Jews and they celebrate their identity in ways both similar to and different from what we do in our local communities. In learning about the Society for Humanistic Judaism and the other congregations, there arises the promise of new friends, fresh ideas, different music, and diverse perspectives. This enriches us, enables us to deepen our knowledge of Humanistic Judaism and enhances our ability to celebrate our identity.

Beyond North America is the world of Secular Humanistic Judaism. Secular Humanistic Judaism in Hebrew, Italian, French, Russian, and Spanish is a mind boggling and exhilarating experience. Each country contributes their particular point of view and unique expression of our basic philosophy to our collective understanding. What we share is the passion of our viewpoint. New worlds are opened to us.

We are strengthened by this expansion of our vision. We are no longer only a local congregation, no longer only a North American Society. We are a worldwide movement. We feel the excitement that this realization affords us. We are something greater than our individual selves.

*Rabbi Miriam Jerris*

### SONG: HINNAY MA TOV

HIN-NAY MA TOV OO-MA-NA-EEM  
SHE-VET A-HEEM GAM YA-HAD

הִנֵּה מַה טוֹב וּמַה נְעִים  
שֶׁבֶת אֲחִים גַּם יַחַד

*How good and how pleasant it is for brothers and sisters to celebrate together*

*Psalms 133:1*

## HOPE

I believe.

I believe in hope.

I believe in hope that chooses – that chooses self respect above pity.

I believe in hope that dismisses – that dismisses the petty fears of petty people.

I believe in hope that feels – that feels distant pleasure as much as momentary pain.

I believe in hope that acts – that acts without the guarantee of success.

I believe in hope that kisses – that kisses the future with the transforming power of its will.

Hope is a choice,  
never found,  
never given,  
always taken.

Some wait for hope to capture them.  
They act as the prisoners of despair.  
Others go searching for hope.  
They find nothing but the reflection of their own anger.

Hope is an act of will,  
affirming, in the presence of evil,  
that good things will happen,  
preferring in the face of failure, self-esteem to pity.

Optimists laugh, even in the dark  
They know that  
hope is a life style –  
not a guarantee.

*Rabbi Sherwin Wine*



## SONG: AYFO OREE? OREE BEE

AYFO OREE? OREE BEE

AYFO TIKVATEE? TIKVATEE BEE

AYFO KOKHEE? KOKHEE BEE

V'GAM BAKH

אֵיפֹה אֹרֵי ? אֹרֵי בִי  
אֵיפֹה תְקוּתִי ? תְקוּתִי בִי  
אֵיפֹה כֹחִי ? כֹחִי בִי  
וְגַם בָּךְ

*Where is my light? My light is in me.  
Where is my hope? My hope is in me.  
Where is my strength? My strength is in me.  
And in you.*

*Rabbi Sherwin Wine*

## THE JEWS

The Jews are like photos in a display window,  
All of them together, short and tall, alive and dead,  
Brides and grooms, bar mitzvah boys and babies.  
Some are restored from old yellowed photographs.  
Sometimes people come and break the window.  
And burn the pictures. And then they start  
Photographing and developing all over again  
And displaying them again, sad and smiling.

Rembrandt painted them wearing Turkish  
Turbans with beautiful burnished gold.  
Chagall painted them hovering in the air,  
And I paint them like my father and my mother.  
The Jews are an eternal forest preserve  
Where the trees stand dense, and even the dead  
Cannot lie down. They stand upright, leaning on the living,  
And you cannot tell them apart. Just that fire  
Burns the dead faster.

And about God? God lingered  
Like the scent of a beautiful woman who once  
Faced them in passing and they didn't see her face,  
Only her fragrance remained, kinds of perfumes,  
Blessed be the Creator of kinds of perfumes.  
A Jewish man remembers the sukkah in his grandfather's home.



And the sukkah remembers for him  
The wandering in the desert that remembers  
The grace of youth and the Tablets of the Ten Commandments  
And the gold of the Golden Calf and the thirst and the hunger  
That remember Egypt.

And what about God? According to the settlement  
Of divorce from the Garden of Eden and from the Temple.  
God sees his children only once  
A year, on Yom Kippur.

The Jews are not a historical people  
And not even an archaeological people, the Jews  
Are a geological people with rifts  
And collapses and strata and fiery lava.  
Their history must be measured  
On a different scale.

The Jews are buffed by suffering and polished by torments  
Like pebbles on the seashore.  
The Jews are distinguished only in their death  
As pebbles among other stones:

When the mighty hand flings them,  
They skip two times, or three,  
On the surface of the water before they drown.

Some time ago, I met a beautiful woman  
Whose grandfather performed circumcision  
Long before she was born. I told her,  
You don't know me and I don't know you.  
But we are in the Jewish people,  
Your dead grandfather and I the circumcised and you the beautiful  
granddaughter  
With golden hair: we are the Jewish people.

And what about God? Once we sang  
"There is no God like ours," now we sing, "There is no God of ours"  
But we sing. We still sing.

*Yehuda Amichai*  
*Reprinted with permission*

## PEACE

There were prophets of Israel who dreamed some strange dreams. Amid the horror of defeat, exile, and captivity they saw the vision of a world without war. Swords would be changed to plowshares. Spears would be transformed into pruning-hooks. Nations would forget the art of killing. In these fantasies the prophets expressed a universal hope that even repeated disappointments are powerless to destroy. We may pride ourselves on our willingness to see people and nations as they really are. We certainly know that brutality has dominated human history. Yet while we may plead the virtues of experience and realism, we don't seem to be able to let go of these dreams. We have difficulty dismissing a vision of peace. Despite our great efforts, we may yet fail. But a dream so precious should never be abandoned. It may be achieved if we dare to make it happen.

*Rabbi Sherwin Wine, adapted by Rabbi Jeffrey Falick*

## SONG: NA'ASEH SHALOM

*Traditional, adapted from Oseh Shalom by Rabbi Sherwin Wine*

## MEMORIAL

We take this time to remember our loved ones who shared their wisdom with us by word and by example. We remember them as their words echo in our ears. We remember them as we picture them in our mind's eye. We remember them each time we notice them in ourselves, saying what they would say, gesturing in the way they would gesture.

We remember their tears and their laughter. We remember their hope and despair. We remember their anger and their praise. We remember their achievements and their failures. We remember their frowns and their smiles. We remember their frustrations and their successes. We remember their jokes and their stories. We remember their disappointments and triumphs. We remember the things they did and the things left undone.

Most of all we remember their gentle words and soft touch and all the silent unspoken ways they affected us, and we give thanks for their presence in our lives.

*Rabbi Miriam Jerris*

## HUMANIST KADDISH

**Congregation:**

NITGADAL V'NITKADASH B'RUAKH HAADAM

נִתְגַדַּל וְנִתְקַדַּשׁ בְּרוּחַ הָאָדָם

*Let us enhance and exalt ourselves in the spirit of humanity.*

*Let us acclaim the preciousness of life.*

*Let us show gratitude for life by approaching it with reverence.*

*Let us embrace the whole world, even as we wrestle with its parts.*

*Let us fulfill, each of us in our own way, our share in serving the world and seeking truth.*

*May our commitment to life help us strengthen healing of spirit and peace of mind.*

*May healing and peace permeate and comfort all of Israel and all those who dwell on earth.*

NITGADAL V'NITKADASH B'RUAKH HAADAM

נִתְגַדַּל וְנִתְקַדַּשׁ בְּרוּחַ הָאָדָם

*Let us enhance and exalt ourselves in the spirit of humanity.*

*And let us say: Ken y'hee. May it be so.*

*Jon Dickman and Congregation Kol Shalom inspired by Rabbi Rami Shapiro*



## SONG: SHEEM'OO

SHE-M'-OO SHE-M'-OO O-HA-VAY  
A-HA-VA  
KEE-R'-OO KEE-R'-OO MO-SHEE-AY  
Y'-SHOO-A  
KEE AYN Y'-SHOO-A B'-LEE A-HA-  
VA  
O A-HA-VA A-HA-VA KAYN T'-HEE

שְׁמָעוּ שְׁמָעוּ אוֹהֲבֵי אֶהְבָּה  
קְרָאוּ קְרָאוּ מוֹשִׁיעֵי יְשׁוּעָה  
כִּי אֵין יְשׁוּעָה בְּלִי אֶהְבָּה  
אוֹ אֶהְבָּה אֶהְבָּה כֵּן תְּהִי

*Listen now, you lovers of love.  
Hear this, you seekers of happiness  
There is no happiness without love.*

*Rabbi Sherwin Wine*

## SHABBAT MESSAGE OR DISCUSSION



## CLOSING SONG: PEACE BE WITH YOU

*Anne Bartenfeld-Barrows, adapted by Rabbi Daniel Friedman*

*This Shabbat Service was prepared by Rabbi Miriam Jerris of the Society for Humanistic Judaism  
Music is available for the songs included in the service for non-commercial purposes only  
Contact: [rabbi@shj.org](mailto:rabbi@shj.org)*