



## ADAS ISRAEL DAILY MINYAN EVERYTHING YOU WANTED TO KNOW ABOUT WEEKDAY SERVICES

If you've been reading this newsletter over the past year or so, you may have seen a number of articles about the Daily Minyan. Among other things, the articles have discussed the surprising success of Zoomed services, the triumphant return to the building for in-person weekday morning services, and the comfort minyan has brought to bereaved worshippers.

But some of you may be wondering what actually takes place at weekday services. So here, in question-and-answer format, is an abbreviated description. Join us sometime if you want to get a taste of the real thing.

### **Q. What is minyan exactly?**

A. Jews are obliged to pray three times a day—in the morning, in the afternoon and in the evening. The Adas minyan affords those who wish to pray in a communal setting the opportunity to do just that. Every day that isn't on Shabbat or a chag (festival), Adas offers a morning service (shacharit); an afternoon service (mincha); and an evening service (maariv).

### **Who attends these services?**

It's a mix of regulars, semi-regulars and those who are either in mourning (they recently lost a close relative) or observing a Yahrzeit (the anniversary of the death of a close relative) and wish to recite the mourner's kaddish with the community. And thanks to the magic of Zoom, the minyan regularly attracts worshippers from outside the DMV area and, indeed, from outside the U.S.

### **Does the minyan meet in-person as well?**

As of this newsletter's deadline, Adas was offering a hybrid format for morning minyan. The minyan is meeting in-person every day (Sunday through

Friday) and continues to be available via Zoom. As of now, PM minyan is meeting in-person only on Tuesdays; PM services are available only via Zoom on other days. More about Zoom services later.

### **How many people attend?**

As people have become increasingly comfortable attending services in-person, the number of worshippers at morning minyan in the Biran Beit Midrash--typically 10 to 20--often exceeds the 10 to 15 worshippers on Zoom. The first regularly scheduled in-person Tuesday PM minyan, held on October 25, drew 12 people, but that's not a large enough sample size to draw any conclusions.

### **Who leads weekday services?**

It's a mix of clergy and lay leaders under the leadership of Adas Israel's ritual director, Hazzan Rachel Goldsmith.

### **I am familiar with Shabbat services. How do weekday services differ?**

As at Shabbat services, many worshippers will wear tallitot at weekday morning services. But you'll also see many wearing tefillin (phylacteries). The weekday services will also sound different than Shabbat services because they utilize less flowery nusachim, or musical modes. And, most notably, weekday services are pretty short in comparison to Shabbat services.

### **What about the actual prayers?**

There are many similarities between weekday morning and Shabbat morning services. Both begin with Birkot haShachar (the morning blessings) before moving to P'sukei d'Zimra (verses of song). (The Shabbat service contains some prayers and psalms that are not recited on weekdays.) Both services then move to the Barchu (the formal call to prayer) and Shacharit, which as



Adas Israel's rabbis regularly remind us, focuses on light, love and redemption. Both shacharit services include the Shema. When we get to the Amidah, however, there is some divergence. The first three prayers and the last three prayers of the weekday and Shabbat Amidot are the same. But while the middle section of the Shabbat Amidah contains a lengthy blessing expressing our joy at being given this special day, the middle section of the weekday Amidah contains 13 petitions that are not considered appropriate for Shabbat. In addition, on most weekdays—but only on weekdays—worshippers follow the Amidah with Tachanun, a set of prayers that contain confessions of sins and petitions for God's grace and mercy.

### Do you read Torah on weekdays?

Yes, on Mondays, Thursdays, Rosh Chodesh, minor holidays and the intermediate days of Sukkot and Passover. But instead of the seven aliyot plus the maftir aliyah on Shabbat, there are only three or four aliyot on weekdays. B'nai mitzvah generally attend minyan and receive aliyot and blessings on a Torah-reading day before the Shabbat of their actual bar and bat mitzvah ceremonies.

### Then what?

In general, the service ends with several more psalms, Aleinu and the mourner's kaddish. A brief musaf service is added on Rosh Chodesh and the intermediate days of Sukkot and Passover.

### What about mincha?

The afternoon service is the simplest and quickest of the daily services. It consists mainly of Ashrei, the Amidah, Aleinu and the mourner's kaddish. Adas typically offers mincha and maariv back-to-back at 6 p.m. But during standard time, when the sun sets early, we essentially dispense with mincha and replace it with a psalm and a mincha kaddish, before moving on to maariv. On Fridays, Adas offers a brief Zoom-only, mincha-only service that starts at 4 p.m. during standard time and 5:15 p.m. during daylight savings time.

### What's maariv like?

If you've stayed for the end of Yom Kippur services, you've heard the clergy lead a weekday maariv service. It begins with the Barchu, followed by blessings acknowledging the miracle of creation

and the giving of the Torah, and the Shema. Then come blessings praising God as the redeemer of the people Israel and for offering protection during the night. Those are followed by a prayer in which worshippers praise God at day's end, followed by the Amidah, Aleinu and the mourner's kaddish.

### Are virtual services the same as in-person services?

Mostly yes. But when Adas first went virtual in March 2020, the clergy determined that a virtual minyan does not constitute an actual minyan. As a result, when we pray on Zoom only (or if we don't have at least 10 adults in the room) we omit items that require a true in-person minyan—the Barchu, the kedusha (part of the morning and afternoon Amidot) and most of the kaddishes. The clergy made an exception for the mourner's kaddish, but did so with a modification—we omit the congregational response, the "Yehei shmei rabbah" line.

### Anything else?

Post-davening breakfast is an important component of morning minyan. In March 2022, after a two-year hiatus, Adas resumed serving breakfast, in the Biran Beit Midrash, after morning minyan. Dozens of members have already offered to sponsor breakfast platters (lox...). Also, it turns out that Zoomed minyan is surprisingly conducive to schmoozing. So feel free to join us before the designated starting times and stay after services end and get to know other worshippers. In addition, some minyan goers deliver remarks about their loved ones at important milestones, such as shloshim (30 days after burial), the first Yahrzeit or other significant Yahrzeits.

### How do I stay on top of things at minyan?

The nearly 550 people on the Daily Minyan email list receive weekly updates that include, among other things, service schedules and upcoming Yahrzeits; copies of remarks delivered by worshippers, and other helpful information. If you'd like to be on the list, send an email to [mannyschiffres@gmail.com](mailto:mannyschiffres@gmail.com). If you have questions about the services or wish to speak, lead the davening or read Torah, contact Hazzan Goldsmith at [hazzan.goldsmith@adasisrael.org](mailto:hazzan.goldsmith@adasisrael.org).