Ideas for Creating a Personal Home Sanctuary ~ Mikdash M’at
A little preparation can go a long way.

After the destruction of the ancient Temple, the rabbis taught that our homes would become our “mikdash m’at,” a miniature sanctuary, a holy place. Our current challenge is to create a sacred space at home while we are in front of our computers or other devices. This guide will help you meet this moment with kavanah/intention.

In the days before the High Holy Days:

- Choose a prayer space, ideally separate from where you work or go to school or change it in some way to make it feel different. See below.
- Locate your machzor, High Holy Day prayer book. (See page 5 here for details.)
- If you wear a tallit or kippah, locate yours or borrow them from Mount Zion.
- Spend time with the schedule to find the services and programs you will join.
- Buy flowers to add to your space and any other decorative touches. See below.

Set up your space in advance so you are not rushing:

- Select your largest screen to view services. Ideally, set up your TV (connected to the internet) or put your computer at a distance so you are not tempted to multitask.
- Add a decorative pillow or chair cover to your seat.
- Bring meaningful objects into your space, including a white tablecloth and flowers. If you own a shofar, place it where it is visible.
  - On Rosh Hashanah evening, we encourage you to bring into your space candlesticks, a kiddush cup, challah, and apples & honey.
  - On Yom Kippur evening, in addition to candlesticks and a memorial candle, you could bring in family heirlooms and/or photos of loved ones.
- If you have young children in the house, put out coloring sheets, and activities that will spiritually nourish them so you can focus on the service. Sue Summit can provide activities if you need them ssuffmit@mzion.org.
- Consider writing an important word or saying on a nice piece of paper to keep you focused and to maintain your intention for the High Holy Days.

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As you get ready to settle into your space (at least an hour before services):

- Dress in a way to inspire readiness for the High Holy Days. Wear the clothing you would wear to the synagogue, including a kipah and tallit if it is your custom. Traditionally, we wear a tallit for all morning services and for only one night a year, on Kol Nidre.
- Try to limit or disconnect distractions from your devices.
- Say a blessing or kavanah/intention over your space to mark it as your mikdash m’at.

Here are two suggestions:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה אֱלֹהִים, מַשְׁרֵי מַעְדֵּי בָּרוּךְ לְעָלָם.

Ba-ruch Atah Adonai, ha-mav-dil bein ko-desh l’-chol.
Blessed are You Adonai, who separates between holy and ordinary.

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בְּזֶה הַשַּׁﬠַר לֹא יָבוֹא צַﬠַר
Let no sorrow come through this gate.

בְּזֹאת הַדִּירָה לֹא תָבוֹא צָרָה
Let no trouble come in this dwelling.

בְּזֹאת הַדֶּלֶת לֹא תָבוֹא בֶּהָלָ
Let no fright come through this door.

בְּזֹאת הַמַּחְלָקָה לֹא תָבוֹא מַחְלוֹקֶת
Let no conflict come to this section.

בְּזֶה הַמָּקוֹם תְּהִי בְרָכָה וְשָׁלוֹם
Let there be blessing and peace in this place.

- Start the service at least 15 minutes early to make sure that your sound and settings are working and to reduce the possibility of stress with the technology.
- Call your on-call shamash if you need any help at 651-337-8288.

May your experience of these Holy Days bring you all that you need for this to be a good new year.