

A. Introduction.

In 2018, the CJC Board Executive Committee tasked the Religious Practices Committee to develop halakhic policy recommendations regarding internal Shabbat policy, including: (1) hiring CJC teens on High Holy Days, (2) writing on Shabbat, and (3) the use of technology on Shabbat.¹ Typical issues include a desire to have an amplified Klezmer band after certain Shabbat services, photographing the Torah on Simchat Torah, and photographing certain Shabbat services (including for a proposed Instagram campaign).²

The Committee concluded (1) that each policy issue is informed by a common concern for the sanctity of Shabbat. The Committee agreed to a course of study as a *beit din*.³ As a *beit din*, the Committee developed a list of concerns that are implicated by Shabbat / Ḥag observance in our sanctuary. The Committee's studies surveyed the Judaic tradition including Torah and other Biblical sources⁴, Talmudic⁵, Apocryphal⁶, post-Talmudic, and non-rabbinic materials including the Dead Sea Scrolls.⁷

As discussed below, the Committee identified six values that should permeate Shabbat observance at CJC.

¹ Minutes, Religious Practices Committee, August 7, 2018.

² Steven Kramer (Co-President), email to John Evans, December 18, 2018.

³ “We accept the halakha, which is rooted in the Talmud, as the norm of Jewish life, availing ourselves, at the same time, of the method implicit therein to interpret and develop the body of Jewish Law in accordance with the actual conditions and spiritual needs of modern life.” One of the five planks of the platform of the Society for the Jewish Renaissance, the proto-Reconstructionist organization that Mordecai Kaplan helped to found in 1920. Kaplan diverges from the Orthodox approach by identifying the Talmud, rather than the *Shulhan Arukh* or the other medieval law codes, as the foundational halakhic text. Kaplan claims for “ourselves” — not just for traditionally recognized halakhic authorities — the right “to interpret and develop” Jewish law. As a valid basis on which to make changes in Jewish law, Kaplan recognizes the changed “spiritual needs” of today’s Jews, as well as the changed “actual conditions” of today’s Jewish communities. See Daniel Goldman Cedarbaum, *Reconstructing Halakha*, <http://www.jewishrecon.org/resource/reconstructing-halakha>.

⁴ Hyman Routtenberg, *The Laws of Sabbath: Biblical Sources*, Parts I and V, Jewish Bible Quarterly.

⁵ Hyman Routtenberg, *The Laws of Sabbath: Biblical Sources*, Part IV, Jewish Bible Quarterly (this section presents materials from *Pesikta Rabbatti*; *Y. Shabbat*; *Y. Berakot*; *Mechilta* Jethro; and *Mechilta* Tanna D’bei Eliyahu).

⁶ 1 Maccabees 2:29–41; Book of Jubilees 2:17–32; 50:6–13.

⁷ Dead Sea Scrolls, CD10:17b–19; 10:20–21; 10:22–11:1; 11:2–5a; 11:7b–11a; 11:14b; 11:17b–18a.; Alex P. Jassen (Univ. Minn.), *What Type of Word Exactly Cannot be Spoken? Isaiah 58:13 and the Sabbath Prohibition on Business Related Speech in the Dead Sea Scrolls, Jubilees, and Rabbinic Literature*, Paper presented at Annual Meeting of the Society of Biblical Literature. Biblical Law Section. Boston, MA., November 25, 2008.

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At its March 2023 meeting, the Religious Practices Committee began to consider policy relating to sponsorship of external secular events on Shabbat.⁸ The Committee expanded the list of values that should inform the internal policy, and added an external, Shabbat and Ḥag Policy.

B. Internal Shabbat Policy and Values.

1. *Kaddosh. Shabbat, as observed at CJC, should be observed to be distinct from weekdays.*

The heaven and the earth were finished, and all their array. On the seventh day God finished the work (*melachah*) that God had been doing, and God ceased on the seventh day from all the work (*melachah*) that God had done. And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because on it God ceased from all the *melachah* (work of creation) that God had done.

Genesis 2:1–3.

Moses then convoked the whole Israelite community and said to them: These are the things that God has commanded you to do: On six days work may be done, but on the seventh day you shall have a Sabbath of complete rest, holy to God.

Exodus 35:1–2.

Observe the Sabbath day to make it holy, as Adonai your God has commanded you. Six days you shall labor and do all your work (*melachah*), but the seventh day is a Sabbath of Adonai your God; you shall not do any *melachah*, you, your son or your daughter, your male or female slave, your ox or your ass, or any of your cattle, or the stranger in your settlements, so that your male and female slave may rest as you do. Remember that you were a slave in the land of Egypt and Adonai your God freed you from there with a mighty hand and an outstretched arm; therefore Adonai your God has commanded you to observe the Sabbath day.

⁸ See Religious Practices Committee, Minutes March 7, 2023 Meeting.

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*Deuteronomy 5:12–15.*⁹

And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy, because on it God ceased from all the *melachah* that God had done. *Gen. 2:3*. R. Abraham Joshua Heschel writes: Qadosh. Holy. A word that more than any other is representative of the mystery and majesty of the divine. First use of qadosh in the Bible is not of an object, but of time: “And God blessed the seventh day and made it holy.” The account of creation does not apply appellation qadosh to any object.¹⁰

2. *Shabbat, as observed at CJC, should be spiritually and educationally enriching.*

Shabbat is more than the mere observance of law and the Rabbis did not deify the law: “The Sabbath is given unto you, not you unto the Sabbath.”¹¹

Shabbat should be spiritually uplifting. “Call the Sabbath a delight.” Isaiah 58:13.

“You might think I have given you the Sabbath for your displeasure; I have surely given you the Sabbath for your pleasure.” To sanctify the seventh day does not mean: Thou shalt mortify thyself, but, on the contrary: Thou shalt sanctify it with all thy heart, with all thy soul, and with all thy senses. “Sanctify the Sabbath by choice meals, by beautiful garments; delight your soul with pleasure and I will reward you for this very pleasure.”¹²

Heschel writes, “Observing the Sabbath is not only about refraining from work, but about creating *menuha*, a restfulness that is also a celebration.”¹³ “After the six days of creation – what did the universe still lack? *Menuha*. Came the Sabbath, came *menuha*, and the universe was complete.”¹⁴

⁹ The Sabbath/weekday distinction is further noted in Ex. 16:4–31, 20:8–10, 23:12, 31:12–17, 35:3; Lev. 19:3, 19:30, 23:1–3, 24:5–8, 26:2; Num. 15:32–36, 28:9–10.

¹⁰ Abraham Joshua Heschel, *THE SABBATH*, 9, Farrar, Straus and Giroux, New York (1951) (Intro, Susannah Heschel) See note 7, p. 104.

¹¹ Heschel, *THE SABBATH*, 17 (quoting Mekilta to Ex. 31:13).

¹² Heschel, *THE SABBATH*, 18 (citing *Deuteronomy rabba* 3, 1; *Midrash Tehellim* ch. 90).

¹³ Heschel, *THE SABBATH*, xiv.

¹⁴ Heschel, *THE SABBATH*, 22 (citing Rashi, midrash on Megillah 9a; on Gen. 2:3; Tosafot Sanhedrin 38a).

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Shabbat should be spiritually and educationally enriching:

R. Brechia said, The Sabbath was given for (‘Taanug’) pleasure. R. Chagai said, The Sabbath was given for the study of Torah. But there is really no argument between them. When R. Brechia said that the Sabbath was given for pleasure, he had in mind the scholars who toil all week in the study of Torah. For them the Sabbath is an opportunity to have some pleasure. When R. Chagai, on the other hand, said that the Sabbath was given for the study of the Torah, he had in mind the laborers who all week are engaged in their work, and when the Sabbath comes, they have the opportunity to study Torah.¹⁵

3. *Shabbat, as observed at CJC, should be Communal.*

As we have defined communal, it means that Shabbat observance must work for families. Children should be welcomed and encouraged. We suggest an area in Sanctuary (To one side? In the rear?) be designated for (quiet?) coloring/reading/playing using materials with some Judaic content. “When the toddler begins to talk, his father speaks to him in the holy language and teaches him Torah.”¹⁶

Communal implies participation and respect for all participants.

Communal implies observance is calm and not overloaded, infused with the spirit of *menuha*, the restfulness that is also a celebration.

Communal implies Shabbat observance should be accommodating of today’s realities.¹⁷

¹⁵ Hyman Routtenberg, *The Laws of Sabbath: Biblical Sources*, Part IV, 6(4) Jewish Bible Quarterly 204–206 (Summer 1978) (citing Pesikta Rabatti, Piska Aseret Hadibrot, 3).

¹⁶ Marc Hirshman, *Individual and Group Learning in Rabbinic Literature: Some Key Terms*, Tikvah Working Paper 07/12, The Tikvah Center For Law & Jewish Civilization, New York Univ., 3 (quoting Sifre Deut. 46). [<http://www.nyutikvah.org/publications.html>]

¹⁷ Michael L. Rodkinson, *Babylonian Talmud: Section Moed (Festivals), Tracts Betzah, Succah, and Moed Katan*, Vol VII (P. 50); Judith Hauptman, *Why Did R. Naḥman Permit Yalta to be Transported on a Palanquin on a Festival? A New Reading Of Bavli Beṣah 25b*, Vol. II(1) Zeramim: An Online Journal of Applied Jewish Thought, 17, 32 (Fall 2017 / 5778) (“Many other anecdotes in the Babylonian Talmud accomplish similar goals. They introduce adjustments to the rules as the rules are implemented and change becomes reasonable and necessary. The Talmud itself thus implies that when law meets life, rabbis may alter the law to accommodate it to life circumstances.”) (The *Tosefta* relates a *sugya* to teach the laws of Shabbat may be relaxed to accommodate current, family realities. *Tosefta* Beṣah 3:17 first states the rule: “on a festival . . . a man must not be carried in a chair. It matters not whether it is a man or a woman.” The *sugya* continues: “Did not R. Naḥman allow his wife to be carried in a palanquin (a sedan chair)? The case with Yalta was different; she was timid. Amemar and Mar Zutra were

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4. *Shabbat, as observed at CJC, should value the inclusion of music.*

According to the *Sifre*, the Torah refers to the Sabbath as “a day of gladness.” On the verse, “Also in the day of your gladness, and in your appointed seasons, and in your new moons, ye shall blow with the trumpets.” (*Num.* 10:10). *Sifre* comments: “in the day of your gladness,” this refers to the Sabbaths.¹⁸

Rabbi Akiva said the Levites of the Temple sang a special song for each day. For Shabbat: A Psalm, a Song for the Sabbath Day; a Psalm, a song for the time that is to come, for the day that will be all Sabbath and rest in life eternal.¹⁹

With the arrival of Shabbat, some people chant the *Song of Songs*.²⁰

Even on Shabbat, the Temple water-drawing ceremony, included the use of the *halil*, a wind instrument.²¹

5. *Shabbat, as observed at CJC, should be enhanced by the respectful use of technology.*

This value refers equally to the observance of Shabbat and Ḥagim.

The use of technology, as however defined, should be respectful and non-intrusive. Some aspects of the use of technology would include:

- a. CJC designated and trained photographer/videographer.
- b. No flash photography.

carried on the Sabbath before the festivals on a palanquin, because there was a crowd and it was feared they would be injured).

¹⁸ Hyman Routtenberg, *The Laws of Sabbath: Biblical Sources*, Part IV, Jewish Bible Quarterly (citing *Sifre*, 77).

¹⁹ Heschel, THE SABBATH, 73 (citing Mishna Tamid; Rosh Hashanah 31a).

²⁰ Heschel, THE SABBATH, 67.

²¹ Shimon Bakon, *Music in the Bible*, VI(4) Dor le Dor (Jewish Bible Quarterly) 161, 169 (Summer 1978) (citing *Mishna Succoth* (5:1)); Rabbi Shlomo Zacharow, *Musical Instruments In Synagogue – Contemporary Issues In Halakha*, <http://learn.conservativeyeshiva.org/contemporary-issues-in-halakha-7-musical-instruments-in-synagogue-introduction/> (“Those Jews who don’t know the structure, or don’t know Hebrew, will only give you an hour,” said Ron Wolfson, president of the not-for-profit organization Synagogue 3000, which is dedicated to revitalizing synagogue life. “You’ve got to grab them spiritually and emotionally right off the bat, and music is the key to engaging them”).

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- c. Signs at the entry, advising that for the honor of the Torah, the safety of the participants, and to avoid distractions, that only CJC-designated photographer(s) are permitted.
 - d. A request from the *bimah* that all electronic devices be silenced.
 - e. CJC will grant access to photographs upon permission of the subjects.
 - f. Families may take B'nai Mitzvah photographs at rehearsals and at other designated times.
 - g. High Holy Days.
 - i. Live streaming and/or recording is permitted using unobtrusive technology such as that present at Wilde Lake Interfaith Center.
 - h. The playback of prerecorded video and/or audio to enhance educational experiences (drashot, lunch & learn, etc.)
 - i. The use of Zoom or other video conferencing technologies to expand the availability of CJC services to people who are unable to attend in person.
6. *Shabbat, as observed at CJC, should enhance the family experience.*

This value refers equally to the observance of Shabbat and Ḥagim. On occasion, a family's spiritual experience may be enhanced by the provision of babysitting services.

As appropriate, CJC should provide babysitting services which must have some Jewish content to provide for educational and/or spiritual enrichment. The services may be provided by CJC members and may be provided by teens and at least one adult.

C. External Shabbat and Ḥag Policy and Values.

1. CJC will not sponsor any secular activity which conflicts with our Shabbat services, Friday evening or Saturday morning, unless it also includes a worship component approved by the chair of the Religious Practices Committee or the Chair's designee. Under no circumstances will CJC's

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regular Shabbat service be canceled due to a secular event.²² In addition, CJC will not sponsor secular activities on the following h̄agim: Rosh Hashanah, Yom Kippur, Sukkot, Shmini Atzeret, Simchat Torah, Pesah, and Shavuot.

- a. CJC will not sponsor activities requiring exchange of money on Shabbat.²³
 - b. Limmud Torah. Any secular event sponsored by CJC must be associated with teachings from our Tradition.²⁴
2. Decisions regarding a request for a waiver of this Shabbat and Hag policies to allow participation as a CJC community in a secular activity on Shabbat, will be made by a subcommittee of the Committee.
- a. membership:
 - i. CJC President or the President’s designee
 - ii. The Committee Chair or designee
 - iii. A member of either the board or the Committee as designated by the CJC President or the Committee Chair in their absence.
 - b. The sub-committee will bring decisions to the Board. Should four (4) or more members of the Board request it, a meeting and vote will be scheduled for the Board to make a final decision.
 - c. Unless the event is emergent and scheduled on short notice, the request should come to the Committee Chair at least 6 weeks prior to the event.

²² Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath*, 29 (The Sabbath must all be spent “in charm, grace, peace, and great love . . . for on it even the wicked in hell find peace.” It is, therefore, a double sin to show anger on the Sabbath. “Ye shall kindle no fire throughout your habitations on the Sabbath day” (Exodus 35 :3), is interpreted to mean: “Ye shall kindle no fire of controversy nor the heat of anger.” Ye shall kindle no fire—not even the fire of righteous indignation”).

²³ Rabbi Abraham Joshua Heschel, *The Sabbath* (“He who wants to enter the holiness of the day must first lay down the profanity of clattering commerce.”).

²⁴ Tanach, Talmud, Midrash, Rabbinic Commentary. “Moses and the Levitical priests spoke to all Israel, saying: *Hasket u-shema, Yisrael*. Silence! Hear, O Israel! Today you have become the people of the Lord your God.” Deut. 27:9 (*Ki Tavo*). The rabbis of Tractate *Berakhot* (63b) interpret *hasket*, a *hapax legomena*, a word which occurs only once in the Bible, to mean Torah-study is required. *Hasket*, i.e., *Has*, and then, afterwards, *katet*, as Rabba [4th generation Babylonian *amoraim*] said, “One should always first study the Torah, and then afterwards ponder it.” Dr. Abraham Gottlieb, “*Hasket u-Shema Yisrael* – Silence! Hear, O Israel,” Bar-Ilan University’s Parashat Hashavua Study Center, Parashat Ki Tavo 5760/2000, <http://www.biu.ac.il/JH/Parasha/eng/kitabo/got.html>.

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- d. The subcommittee will endeavor to return a response to each request to the Committee Chair within one week's time and will always give a response prior to the event.
 - e. The Committee Chair reserves the right to immediately decline an event should there not be enough lead time for deliberation.
3. Every request for secular sponsorship will coordinate with the Religious Practices Committee Chair or designee to ensure that any such event is to be consistent with our Jewish values.
- a. Any secular event needs to include an education component for the CJC membership as a whole, making the connection between the event and our Jewish values. This education should be done ahead of time when possible, however it may be done after the fact in events that are scheduled without enough notice to properly organize for the educational component.
 - b. The CJC Clergy and the Committee will assist in preparing the educational materials and, potentially, delivering them.
 - c. Some examples of educational components:
 - i. Drashot;
 - ii. Lunch/listen & learn; and,
 - iii. Blog posts and other CJC wide communications.
 - d. As a reference this is a partial, non-limiting, list of CJC Jewish Values:
 - i. *Chesed*: acts of loving kindness which may sometimes look like work;
 - ii. *Marit Ayin*: avoiding the appearance of violating law, *i.e.*, something that looks “unJewish;”
 - iii. *Shabbat Kodesh*: *inter alia*, no money exchanged on Shabbat;
 - iv. *Pikuach Nefesh*: standing up for life-saving issues trumps all other mitzvot;
 - v. *Limmud Torah*: we value learning about our tradition;

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- vi. *Haganat HaTeva*: environmental protection;
- vii. *Menucha*: rest on shabbat;
- viii. *Kahal*: Community – does proposed action strengthen our community;
- ix. *Rachmanus*: Service to God, compassion;
- x. *Qadosh*: Holiness;²⁵
- xi. *Emet*: Truth;²⁶
- xii. *Emunah*: Honoring our commitments; and
- xiii. *Avadim Hayim*: Empathy.

²⁵ “And God blessed the seventh day and declared it holy.” Gen. 2:3; “You shall be to me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.” Ex. 19:6.

²⁶ “Your righteousness is eternal righteousness, and your *Torah* is truth.” Ps. 119:142.