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#Sukkot4ClimateHealing

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Beginning the evening of Sunday, October 12, , we will celebrate Sukkot – of all the Jewish festivals, the one most open to Earth, and traditionally the one that seeks a prosperous harvest for all the “seventy nations” of the world.

Yet this year we know that all Earth and all peoples are facing a great crisis. Earth is crying out, “I can’t breathe!” The build-up of surplus CO2 is choking, scorching, and burning the home we humans share with all the other species in the great web of life. Forests are burning, trees are dying, some crops are failing in unheard-of droughts, unprecedented storms and floods are drowning other crops, fish are vanishing as the oceans turn acid.

Can we take Sukkot into public space to call for public policies that will heal our Earth, our asthma-haunted neighborhoods, our jobless workers, our farms and cities consumed by flood or fire?

To heal Earth we will need to weave together scientific knowledge, spiritual wisdom, and political effectiveness. Among the spiritual resources we have are the festivals that were born from Mother Earth and her rhythmic “seasons of our joy.” Today we need Earth’s children -- the festivals -- to serve as sacred instruments for saving and healing their Mother Earth.

The Shalom Center seeks to shape the celebration of **#Sukkot4ClimateHealing** and other festivals like **Hanukkah, Tu B’Shvat, Pesach, and Tisha B’Av** this year and in the future into a series of activist Earth-healing sacred practices. Our sacred goals: ending the climate crisis; healing Earth and Humanity from the ravages of global scorching; reversing the social injustice and oppression that Corporate Carbon Pharaohs and their governmental enablers impose on all of us, especially on the most vulnerable among us; and restoring for our grandchildren the life-giving climate that our grandparents joyfully lived in.

IMAGINE: All across America, synagogues and other Jewish groups initiate multireligious vigils at a local home-district office of a Senator or Congressman.

The vigils gather on Wednesday, Thursday, and/or Friday, October 16, 17, and 18 -- the third, fourth, and fifth days of Sukkot. -- each a weekday, when these offices will be open.

They stand in vigil outside or even inside the office, carrying signs like “Stop Subsidizing Deadly Fossil Fuels, Start Funding Energy from Sun & Wind.”

They wave the Four Species (branches of myrtle, willow, and palm, plus the lemony etrog – or perhaps branches and fruit more familiar in North American ecosystems) in the seven directions of the universe. They chant prayers old and new, songs, psalms, in Hebrew, English, Spanish, and perhaps other languages, all in celebration of a healthy, healing Earth.

They demand a pledge to support the Green New Deal as an act to heal Earth, strengthen social justice with millions of well-paid jobs to create the renewable-energy network we need, and bring life, health, and justice to endangered and marginalized human communities.

Why the Green New Deal? Because it has so far gathered the broadest support for a modern analogue to the Biblical teaching of the eco/social-justice practice of the Shmita/ Sabbatical Year in which Earth rested, human beings freely shared its bounty, and debts were annulled (Lev. 25 & Deut. 15).

Then Sunday October 20, the seventh and last day of Sukkot, known as “Hoshana Rabbah,” the culmination of its prayers and practices, would be the perfect day to gather in sukkot to celebrate and plan for outreach to broaden the community willing to take the next spiritually rooted action to heal Earth. Perhaps the next foray could be on the Friday after Thanksgiving and again during Hanukkah/ Christmastime in late December.

No one person, organization, or community can do this alone. So The Shalom Center welcomes the sharing of such resources as songs, Hoshana prayers in English and Hebrew, designs for placards, and posters for the sukkah itself, all focused on carrying out the goals of the **#Sukkot4ClimateHealing campaign**.

Please help us with your own ideas and suggestions about carrying out this #Sukkot4ClimateHealing campaign. Please click to and respond to a brief survey -- it should take only three minutes – at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/XUCXS7R>
Thanks!

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Rabbi Arthur Waskow founded (1983) and directs The Shalom Center <theshalomcenter.org> . He pioneered the development of Eco-Judaism in the Four Worlds of theology, liturgy, political activism rooted in Torah, and hands-on sacred practice, through such books as Seasons of Our Joy, Down-to-Earth Judaism, and Torah of the Earth and active challenges to governmental and corporate complicity in scorching and burning our wounded Mother Earth.