

הוֹשִׁיעֵנוּ אֱלֹהִים-- כִּי בָאוּ מַיִם עַד-נַפְשׁ

Save us, Creator --because water is life

Psalms 69:1, adapted

Jewish Ritual and Action to bring visibility and resistance to the Indigenous-led struggle for #NoDAPL as Jews begin the month of Cheshvan during which Jews around the world pray for rain and water.

VISUALS/MATERIALS

- Ask participants to [wear blue](#) (together in photos will powerfully evoke water)
- Ask rabbis/those who are comfortable to wear tallitot and kippot
- Create giant blue water drops or banners with these Hebrew and English words on it:
Jews Honor Indigenous Sovereignty
Because Water is life
כִּי בָאוּ מַיִם עַד-נַפְשׁ.
#NoDAPL
- [Flyers to hand out](#) to passersby
- 7 copies of [tefilat hageshem readings](#) (Prayer for Rain & Water)
- [Here](#) is audio of original tune for chanting by Rachel Brown
- [Here](#) is link to original art by Micah Bazant for printing 11x17

SAMPLE RITUAL FLOW

1. Opening Chant
2. Circle Up and Welcome
3. Tefilat HaGeshem: Prayer for rain/water
4. Birkat HaChodesh-blessing the New Month
5. Closing Blessing and Song

RITUAL FACILITATION INSTRUCTIONS

1. Begin chanting “Ki Va’u Mayim Ahd Nefesh, Because Water is Life”

Tune by Rachel Brown can be found [here](#)

2. Circle up & Welcome

Ritual leaders stand in the center. Explain why we are here, can do so with bullhorn or mic check style if crowd is large

- Currently this bank is funding the Dakota Access Pipeline, or DAPL
- Construction of the DAPL would engender a renewed fracking-frenzy in the Bakken shale region, as well as endanger a source of fresh water for the Standing Rock Sioux and 8 million people living downstream.
- DAPL would also impact many sites that are sacred to the Standing Rock Sioux and other indigenous nations, many sacred sites have been destroyed by DAPL construction already.
- We are here today to support and honor indigenous sovereignty
- We are here today to say: Save us, Creator, because water is life. Hoshiyanu elohim, ki va'u mayim ahd nafesh.
- We are here today as Jews as we begin the month of Cheshvan, during which jews all over the world pray for water and rain, to pray for the water, to pray for the water protectors, to pray for an end to DAPL.

3. Tefilat HaGeshem: Prayer for rain/water

Inspired by the work of [Rabbi Jill Hammer](#) (follow [this link](#) if you would like to include chanting in Hebrew as part of the ritual). Can be read by one person or invite 7 people to each read a stanza.

In Tefilat HaGeshem, the prayer for rain, we name the vital necessity of water for our bodies and for our planet. On Standing Rock, people are asking the world to act for justice, to honor water and to pray for strength and healing, especially for the women of Standing Rock who are charged with protecting the water through action and song.

And so we pray for water, calling out to our matriarchs--Rebecca, Rachel, Leah, and Miriam-- and with them indigenous women, water protectors and warriors fighting for water at Standing Rock.

Reader 1:

Our God and God of our ancestors remember Rebecca

Remember the kind one who carried a pitcher of water
To the servant she gave water

In Charan for the camels, she drew water
For her sake, grant water.

Reader 2:

Our God and God of our ancestors Hear [Phyllis Young](#), lifelong water protector

I am "Woman Who Stands By The Water" and my other name is "Woman Who Loves the Water." I was given those names by my people because it's been my life struggle to protect the water.

We want no pipeline. We want no oil going through our river, through our land. We want alternative energy sources—the sun is our brother.

We're at a new threshold of human rights.

For Phyllis' sake, grant water

Reader 3:

Our God and God of our ancestors, remember Rachel:

Remember the younger one who to the flock she gave water

Her lover kissed her near the well of water

At Ramah for her children, her eyes wept tears of water

For her sake, don't hold back water.

Reader 4:

Our God and God of our ancestors hear [Kelly Hayes](#), Indigenous direct action trainer

When you talk about Standing Rock, please begin by acknowledging that this pipeline was redirected from an area where it was most likely to impact white people.

Every Native at Standing Rock — every Native on this continent — has survived the genocide of a hundred million of our people. That means that every Indigenous child born is a victory against colonialism, but we are all born into a fight for our very existence.

For Kelly's sake, don't hold back water.

Reader 5:

Our God and God of our ancestors, remember Leah:

Remember the Mother of Children who at Yabbok was first to cross the water

Her eyes were tender from crying tears of water

Her son lived out his days at the edge of the water

For her sake, grant water.

Reader 6:

Our God and God of our ancestors, hear [Winona LaDuke](#), Indigenous activist

They call this energy independence, you know, shoving a pipeline down people's throats, so that Canadian oil companies can benefit, and, you know, a bunch of people can—the world can worsen. That is not energy independence. Energy independence is when you have solar.

5. CLOSING BLESSING & SONG

Adapted by Dori Midnight

We pray for waters to run free and clear all over the world, from the Cannonball river, to the taps in Flint Michigan, to all the water sources in Palestine and we pray that all beings everywhere have access to the water they need to sustain life and thrive.

Blessed are You, Shekhinah, Source of Life, Who blesses us by embracing us in living waters.

B'rucha at shekhinah eloteinu ruach ha-olam asher kid-shanu bi-tevilah b'mayyim hayyim.

Close with Chanting of "Ki Va'u Mayim Ahd Nefesh, Because Water is Life" Tune by Rachel Brown can be found [here](#)

ALTERNATIVE/ADDITIONAL READINGS

1. Psalms of praise traditionally sung on rosh chodesh, psalms 113-118 in particular.

2. Reading by [Aurora Levins Morales](#)

We are made of water: Salty rivers run in our veins, lymph ebbs and swells, saliva and tears leak into the air and dry. We are always changing: wide seas into clouds, rain into puddles, rivers into muddy fields that run along ditches into the sea. We flow, freeze, boil, rise, disperse, are hurled this way and that. We declare that we are the blue edge of glaciers, the great ocean swell, stagnant teeming ponds, months long tropical downpours, the delicate tracery of frost on a dry leaf, rusty drip of a faucet. We are the shape of what's happened to us. We are caught up in doing, and whirl through our lives, suffering, joyful, filled with doubt. And yet we return to ourselves again and again, to the Self that is all there is. We are made of water, called to find our true level by that great force of love we call gravity. We are made to trust our destination. We are not lost.

3. Readings from Fringes, a Feminist, Non-Zionist Havurah in Philadelphia

<https://fringeshavurah.com/2016/10/26/praying-with-fringes-10262016-dam-breaching/>

<https://fringeshavurah.com/2016/10/25/praying-with-fringes-10252016-this-i-declare/>

4. [Cochabamba declaration on the Right to Water](#)

1. **Water** belongs to the earth and all species and is sacred to life, therefore, the world's water must be conserved, reclaimed and protected for all future generations and its natural patterns respected.
2. **Water** is a fundamental human right and a public trust to be guarded by all levels of government, therefore, it should not be commodified, privatized or traded for commercial purposes. These rights must be enshrined at all levels of government. In particular, an international treaty must ensure these principles are non controvertible.
3. **Water** is best protected by local communities and citizens who must be respected as equal partners with governments in the protection and regulation of water. Peoples of the earth are the only vehicle to promote earth democracy and save water."

5. Alternative prayer for the new month by [Marcia Falk](#)

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