**September**

**Celebrating reconciliation:**

***Teshuvah & Repentance***

After the Days of Repentance, Jews celebrate reconciliation with God and experience God’s unconditional love on Yom Kippur. Christians seek reconciliation: praying, celebrating the Eucharist and turning to God during the 40 days of Lent. Through rituals of repentance, Jews and Christians celebrate God’s mercy, and recommit themselves to living out their faiths in ways that help to transform our world. Beginning anew!

**A Jewish voice**

**short version:**

Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur are considered the High Holidays of Judaism because questions of life and death are reflected on them. "*Who will live and who will die?*" asks a familiar prayer recited on the Jewish New Year and Day of Atonement. The intervening Ten Days of Repentance are devoted to work of self-critical accounting of life *(“cheshbon hanefesh”)*, identifying failures, and trying to make first steps toward betterment, recognizing God’s parental patience and care, while witnessing human decisions.

But it is not enough to plead with God for forgiveness. People themselves must right the wrongs and injuries they have done to others: going to these people, asking for forgiveness and also granting forgiveness, making amends for the damage, is not secondary to prayer and fasting as a religious commandment. Only then there is a hope for reconciliation and people can dare to attempt a new beginning with God, with neighbors and also with themselves.