



CELEBRATING A CALL-UP WITH KOLENU

This guide outlines all you
need to know in celebrating
an *auf Ruf* with us!

Who are we?

Kehilat Kolenu - A Background

Our community was founded in the winter of 2012, beginning with a weekly Kabbalat Shabbat service held in a small living room in St. Kilda East. With a conscious focus on emphasising Hebrew musicality, reviving meaningful Jewish traditions and building community, our service quickly expanded both in its depth and participation. In 2014, we named our growing community *Kehilat* (“community”) *Kolenu* (“our voice”) and found a permanent home at Waks House in Caulfield. Today we run services and events on Tu Bishvat, Pesach, Shavuot, Rosh Hashana and Yom Kippur for a community of over 700 people. In 2018 we are excited to begin offering celebrations of important Jewish life milestones, of which the *aufruf* is a big part.

Our Philosophy

Kehilat Kolenu identifies with the stream of Humanistic Judaism, and is the first congregation of its kind in Australia. Humanistic Judaism marries two components: the culture of the Jewish people (“Judaism”) with a modern, human-centred means of thought (“humanism”). Humanistic Jews value their Jewish identity and celebrate the aspects of Jewish culture which offer genuine expression of their contemporary way of life. We see Judaism as a historical toolkit offering how to lead a more meaningful, spiritual and connected life. It is a treasure house from which we can draw. For a more in-depth understanding of our philosophy, please refer to our “About” web-page.



The Aufruf

Origins and Traditions

It is a longstanding tradition that in the lead up to a Jewish wedding the *chatan* (groom) is given the honour of an *aliyah* (call-up) to the Torah at his local synagogue. In progressive Jewish communities, both the *chatan* and *kalah* (bride) are bestowed with this honour. This ceremony is often referred to using the Yiddish term for "calling up": *aufruf*.

After reading a portion from the Torah in the presence of the community, the couple are showered with sweets and nuts – symbolic of sweetness and fertility. The service is often concluded with a *kiddush* (festive feast) to which the whole community is invited.

The custom is likely to have originated in western Europe in the Middle Ages, where the couple's synagogue appearance served as a public announcement for the upcoming marriage. It also gave the entire community, even those not invited to the wedding, the ability to participate in the celebrations by attending *kiddush* after the service.

The Aufruf at Kolenu

As a progressive, modern community, Kolenu believes in the equal opportunity of the *chatan* and *kalah* – or both members of the marrying couple – to celebrate the honour of a call-up. We invite both families to join together in initiating the week of their wedding *simcha* with an uplifting, joyous and musical Kabbalat Shabbat. Our congregants will delight in sharing their voices and blessings with you and your guests as together we welcome in Shabbat.

Importantly, the *aufruf* at Kolenu is not limited to the recitation of Torah blessings, but extends further to bestow the marrying couple with the honour of delivering the weekly *D'var Torah* to the community – a sermon on the week's Torah portion.



Personalisation

The D'var Torah

Central to Kolenu's celebration of an *aufruf* is empowering the marrying couple by giving them the opportunity to share a message to the community in the weekly *D'var Torah*. A D'var Torah, literally "word of the Torah", is a sermon traditionally delivered on Shabbat, *chaggim* (holidays), during life-cycle events and on other special Jewish occasions. Sharing a Torah thought has been a part of the fabric of Jewish life for millennia.

The D'var Torah is an exploration and interpretation of the weekly *parsha* (Torah portion), which often contains a diverse range of cultural, ethical and historical themes from which to draw. To assist you in crafting your D'var Torah, we will send you a comprehensive guide outlining resources, techniques and guidelines for both writing and delivering the *drasha* (sermon) at Kolenu. We can also meet with you in the weeks prior to the service to assist and support you further. The idea is to give you the platform to deliver your own unique Jewish message and thoughts to your family, friends and community as you transition through this life milestone.

Logistics and Options

There are multiple location options available to you dependent upon the expected attendance at your *aufruf*. If you are expecting only immediate family, the event can be hosted alongside our Kehila at our usual Kabbalat Shabbat location at Waks House (Caulfield) for no cost. Larger celebrations can be catered for at Kadimah Hall (Elsternwick) for an additional cost, or at Habonim Hall (Elsternwick) for minimal expense. Alternative locations at your discretion are a possibility provided they are in the Glen Eira region, given that our regular congregants will wish to attend the event as it remains our weekly Shabbat service. We can also help with decorations/aesthetics.

We can assist you in simple catering options for a community *kiddush* after the service, or you are welcome to organise your own catering. There are simple kitchenettes available at all the locations above.

To discuss these options, find out more or share any other ideas you have, please get in touch with **Daniel Samowitz (0432 296 260)** or email info@kolenu.com.au

