The Molad: Wednesday morning, 1:54 and 16 portions.

The moon may be sanctified until Wednesday, the 13th, 8:16 p.m.¹

The first day of Rosh Chodesh is on Thursday.

On this day, we begin reciting Psalm 27, L’Dovid Hasbom ori, after the Song of the Day in the Morning Service and before Aleinu in the Afternoon Service. (We continue this practice until, and including, Hoshana Rabbah.)

Our custom is to recite only one Mourner’s Kaddish after all the psalms (i.e., the Song of the Day, L’Dovid ori, and Barchi nafshi) are recited. Similarly, in the Afternoon Service, only one Mourner’s Kaddish is recited after L’Dovid ori and Aleinu.

During this day, the shofar is sounded for practice.

The second day of Rosh Chodesh is on Friday.

Every day of this month, we sound the shofar at the end of the Morning Service, with the exception of Shabbos and the day preceding Rosh HaShanah.

Our custom is to sound the series of tekiah-shevarim-teruah-tekiah blasts, then the series tekiah-shevarim-tekiah, and then the series tekiah-teruah-tekiab.

From the second day of Rosh Chodesh Elul until Yom Kippur, in addition to the daily recitation of Psalms according to the monthly cycle, we recite three extra psalms each day (on the first day, Psalms 1-3; on the second, 4-6; etc.). On Yom Kippur itself, we complete the T’hillim, reciting 36 extra psalms: 9 before Kol Nidrei, 9 before going to sleep, 9 after Musaf, and 9 after N’ilah.

If a person did not start this practice on the second day of Rosh Chodesh, he should start on the day he remembers, and then make up for the previous days.²

People who are precise in their observance of the mitzvos have their t’fillin and mezuzos checked during

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¹ The times for sanctifying the moon are based on Jerusalem Standard Time. One should therefore calculate the time for sanctifying the moon according to his location.
² HaYom Yom, Elul 1.
this month, and review carefully their observance of the Torah and its mitzvos, correcting any flaws in their conduct.

**Elul 2, Shabbos Parshas Shoftim.**

We recite the sixth chapter of *Pirkei Avos* following the Afternoon Service.

**Elul 9, Shabbos Parshas Ki Seitzei.**

The Rebbe instructed that when reading the concluding verse of the *Parshab* (*D'varim* 25:19) and when repeating it in *Mafir*, the word זכר in the phrase הזכרה למלך should be read twice: first with a תכשיט (teirei) and then with a סגול (segol).

(The Alter Rebbe instructed that the word דכא (*D'varim* 23:2) in the Torah scroll should be written with an אlef at the end, not with a בei.)

We recite the first and second chapters of *Pirkei Avos* following the Afternoon Service.

**Elul 15, Friday.**

This day marks the anniversary of the founding of *Yeshivas Tomchei Temimim*, the Central Lubavitcher *Yeshivah*, in Lubavitch, in 5657 (1897).

The actual studying of *Nigleh* and *Chassidus* began on the 18th of Elul 5657 (1897).

**Elul 16, Shabbos Parshas Ki Savo.**

In the Torah reading, it is customary for the reader to raise his voice slightly when reading the verse (*D'varim* 26:15) *Hashkifah mim'on kodsh'cha.*

For the sixth *aliyah*, the reader ascends to the Torah without being called. He recites the blessings before and after the Torah reading.

We recite the third and fourth chapters of *Pirkei Avos* following the Afternoon Service.

**Elul 18, Monday, Chai Elul.**

This day marks the birthday of “the two great luminaries,” the *Baal Shem Tov* in 5458 (1698) and the *Alter Rebbe* in 5505 (1745).

**Elul 23, Shabbos Parshas Nitzavim-Vayeilech.**

We recite *T'hillim* as is customary every Shabbos M'varchim, but do not bless the new month.

We read the *Haftorah* beginning *Sos asis* (*Y'sbayahu*

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5. Sefer HaSichos 5703, p. 188.
61:10-63:9).

(The Alter Rebbe said in the name of the Baal Shem Tov: “Tishrei is blessed by the Holy One, blessed be He, Himself. And with the power of this blessing, the Jews bless the other eleven months of the year.”)

We recite the passage Av harachamim.7
We recite the fifth and sixth chapters of Pirkei Avos following the Afternoon Service.

On Motzaei Shabbos, we begin the recitation of S’lichos immediately after halachic midnight. (Please check your local calendar.) On the following days they are recited shortly before dawn or in the early hours of the morning.

When rising to say S’lichos before dawn, one should recite the Morning Blessings and the blessings on the Torah. A person should not recite the blessing Hanosein lasechvi... unless he actually hears a rooster crow. Nor should he recite the blessing She’asah li kol tzorki unless he wears leather shoes. After daybreak, however, these blessings should be recited.

The chazan recites S’lichos while robed in a tallis. If he puts it on at night (before dawn), however, he should not recite a blessing.

The S’lichos prayers begin with Ashrei and a half-Kaddish, and then follow the prescribed order. We recite the confessional prayer (Ashamnu) only once. We do not prostrate ourselves when reciting the passage Vayomer David el Gad. We say a full Kaddish with Tiskabel.

When a person recites S’lichos without a minyan, he should not recite the Thirteen Attributes of Mercy, nor should he recite any of the hymns written in Aramaic, e.g., Machei u’masei.

There are many who follow the custom of fasting on the first day of S’lichos.

Elul 29, Friday, Erev Rosh HaShanah 5781.
This day marks the birthday of the Tzemach Tzedek, Rabbi Menachem Mendel, in 5549 (1789).

On this day, even a person in the seven days of the

Elul

S'lichah mourning may attend the synagogue to recite S’lichos.

The Tachanun supplications are recited in S’lichos, but not in the Morning or Afternoon Services.

The shofar is not sounded.

After the Morning Service, we perform bataras nedarim, the release of vows. This should preferably be performed in the presence of a quorum of 10. It is necessary to understand the words one is reading. A person who does not understand the Hebrew should read the passage in his native tongue. (We do not recite the Seder Nezifah.)

There are many people who fast on this day. If, however, they encounter a feast associated with a mitzvah, they may take part and eat. It is not necessary for them to have this vow released.

We cut our hair and go to the mikvaah.

The Rebbe initiated the practice of assisting the needy with the extra expenses for all the festivals of the month of Tishrei.

Before the evening, we put on our festive garments, confident that G-d will miraculously favor us in judgment and look upon us with the attribute of mercy. He alone judges all created beings.

L’shanah tovah nikaseiv v’neichaseim.
May we all be inscribed and sealed for a good year, with abundant material and spiritual blessings, including the greatest blessing, the coming of Moshiach. Amen!

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