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בס"ד

March 19, 2020

Dear Friend,

This past week, to state the obvious, was truly surreal. I want to simply thank each and every one of you for rising to the occasion, and taking such good care of one another. The outpouring of Chessed has been truly exceptional, though, given this kehillah, unsurprising.

We are all constantly thinking of all those currently afflicted with COVID-19, their loved ones, and we continue to storm the gates of Heaven on their behalf. In particular, please keep in mind the name Malka Idis bat Rivkah.

Likewise, we continue to daven for those health care workers who, in harm's way, are taking care of the sick all around us. *May Rofeh Kol Basar U'Mafli La'asot* continue to guide their hands, and shield them from any harm. It is my deep hope and prayer that one of the long term effects of this transformative moment for our community, and more broadly, an entire generation of young people, is that many of them will commit their lives to working in health professions, as they witness the heroism of those currently serving.

Shabbat Notes

Candle Lighting this week is at 6:50. We should all daven mincha in our homes at that time. As you may have noted in our most recent statement from the RCBC, **we are asking everyone to open their doors to sing Yedid Nefesh collectively at 7:00 PM.** Please be mindful of maintaining appropriate distances from others, in line with our social distancing practices.

As I did last week, I would like to once again request from all of the women in the shul lighting candles tomorrow to daven on behalf of shalom bayit, as the Talmud associates the mitzvah of Shabbat candles with Shalom Bayit. I know how challenging this week has been for everyone, but especially those with small children, and, in a very different way, to those who are experiencing a deep sense of isolation.

On Shabbat morning, we should all daven Shacharit starting at 9:00 AM. Please do your best to read Parshiyot VaYakhel-Pekudei from a Chumash, as well as Parshat HaChodesh (Shemot 12:1-20) as well. Please remember to insert Bichat HaChodesh into your davening as well.

** Immediate Past President
* deceased

Shabbat Mincha should be recited this week at 6:45. Maariv is at 7:50.
Community wide Havdalah on Zoom at 8 PM led by David Gordon and Uri Horowitz. <https://zoom.us/j/329748755> Meeting ID: 329 748 755

Please continue to be mindful of the need for creating an atmosphere of Kedushat Shabbat, by dressing in Bigdei Shabbat throughout the day. I deeply appreciate all of the feedback from those who shared with me that this enhanced their Shabbat last week. Let's keep it going.

Kaddish

Please continue to send me names for kaddish and yahrzeits. We are fortunate that Yeshivat HaKotel is currently permitted to have a minyan and is reciting kaddish on behalf of all our loved ones. Over the course of just one week, our kaddish has moved from Teaneck to Florida to the United Kingdom to Jerusalem. We thank each and every person who has ensured that kaddish continues to be recited.

JCOT Chessed

I thank Debbie Cohen Mlotek for volunteering to help lead this initiative, and doing such a wonderful job. We have successfully paired volunteers with older and homebound members to call every single day, to check in on basic needs, and to ensure that the member is well. To that end, we have already arranged for food deliveries through our wonderful partnership with Glatt Express.

Pesach

We have arranged with Glatt Express to prepare all inclusive Pesach packages for anyone from the shul who would like to have prepared meals for the Sedarim or all of Yom Tov.

Please email Elanna at office@jcot.org regarding ordering food for Pesach through our partnership with Glatt Express.

This all inclusive package will cover:

- * All Essentials for Both Sedarim, Including One Large Bottle of Grape Juice, and One Box of Shmura Matzah
- * Prepared Meals for Sedarim
- * 2 Frozen Meals **Per Person Per Day** for the Rest for of the Chag
- * Free Delivery

The base cost **per person** is \$330 for the entire Chag.

- * For each additional pound of shmura matzah, add \$30.
- * For each additional box of machine made matzah, add \$3.50
- * For each additional large Grape Juice, add \$6.

Orders must be sent into shul office at office@jcot.org by Monday, March 29th.

Please specify if you need Light Grape Juice/Sugar Free Meals.

Beginning early next week, we will be in touch with all matters related to full Pesach preparation. We thank all those who have contributed to Ma'ot Chittin. If you have not yet done so, please do so [here](#).

We look forward to having a Siyyum of Bava Metziah on Erev Pesach led by Reb Yitz, and all Mechirat Chametz will be done electronically this year.

Haggadat Mah Nishtanah

We encourage everyone to send in Divrei Torah, reflections, and children's art to office@jcot.org by April 1st for Haggadat Mah Nishtanah, our shul Seder companion which will be a way of reflection on the unique experience of this Pesach.

Mikvah

As we released in our RCBC guidelines yesterday, the Mikveh will remain open. Women should be reassured that the chlorine and filtration mechanisms in the mikvah, and the extensive cleaning regimen undertaken there, at all times, and especially now, make it safe for use.

Once again, we reiterate that women with COVID-19, those under mandatory quarantine (due to a direct exposure to a COVID-19 presumptive positive) , or showing symptoms associated with COVID-19 (fever, coughing, shortness of breath) should not use the Mikvah until it is safe for them to do so, as determined in consultation with your health care provider.

It is my halakhic view that any woman who wishes to do so may do full preparations at home in advance of going to the mikvah, and may shower immediately after immersion, under these unique circumstances.

Please consult with me directly at rabbi@jcot.org, or with our outstanding Yoetzet Halakha, Tova Warburg Sinensky, at teanekyoetzet@gmail.com if you have questions regarding using the mikvah.

The Keylim Mikvah, whose safety has also been assured, is available for us in fifteen minute increments. Sign up here <https://calendly.com/keylimmikvah/15min?back=1&month=2020-03>. Please be considerate of the high volume, wait until your turn, and do not socialize while you are there.

Health

It is imperative that we guard our health during this time. In consultation with your personal health care provider, it is essential that people continue to exercise, get fresh air (not in social gatherings, of course), eat healthy, and get an appropriate amount of sleep. Our medical committee, led by Dr. Ben Cooper, Dr. Steve Myers, and Dr. Jonathan Resnick has advised me that these aspects of healthy living are absolutely crucial to our overall communal response. **For those looking for referrals to mental health resources at this time, please contact me directly at rabbi@jcot.org.**

Responsibility

There is no adequate way for me to express the importance of abiding by the restrictions of social distancing that we have adopted. These measures were adopted by community leaders on the basis of urgent and expert medical advice, but their efficacy depends chiefly on the compliance of our community.

I look forward to sharing a Drasha with you tomorrow, parshah questions for children, and continuing to be in very close touch in the days ahead.

May the Guardian of Israel watch over our entire community, help all of us adjust to our challenging circumstances, and grant us the wisdom to see the many opportunities from character growth and development the situation presents.

With Deepest Affection for Each and Everyone of You,

Daniel Fridman, Rabbi
Uri Horowitz, President