



First Narayever Congregation's Resumption of In-Person Services Plan

We are pleased to announce a resumption of Narayever Shabbat morning services at our temporary location at Leo Baeck Day School, beginning on Shabbat morning August 29. It feels like a very long time since we met for services, so it will be great to gather in person once again. As with so much else in our society during this period of reopening, our resumption of services must be undertaken with an emphasis on safety. With COVID-19 still in our midst we will be doing things differently than we did before, relying on the guidance issued by the Government of Ontario and Toronto Public Health. Our Resumption of Service Committee (RoS) is pleased to update you with our Narayever guidelines for restoring services as of this point in time.

Our work has been informed by the following Jewish values

- *Kehilla*: the role of the synagogue is to gather people together
- *Halacha*: Jewish law obligates regular communal prayer
- *Ve-chai bahem*: we are mandated to live by the commandments, not die by them
- *Pikuach Nefesh*: saving a life overrides other commandments

As you can see, during this pandemic, these guiding Jewish principles remind all of us that there can be competing but equally prioritized needs in resuming services, and these have guided the creation of this document. We ask that you read this document while bearing these principles in-mind.

Our first service together will be on Shabbat, August 29, 10:00 - 11:30 am at Leo Baeck Day School, which as you know is our temporary home during the renovation of our building on Brunswick. In this initial phase of resumption, there will be no kiddush lunch or children's programs. We look forward to restoring those important components when conditions allow. Decisions about Friday night and Sunday morning services will be made after the High Holidays.

Below are the protocols we will be following in order to have a meaningful service, while at the same time maximizing the safety of all attendees.

1. If you have COVID 19, or if you have any symptoms of respiratory illness (cough, fever, shortness of breath, runny nose or sore throat), even if symptoms appear to be mild or resemble a cold, please stay home. If you're concerned about your vulnerability to COVID-19, please check with your doctor before coming to services.

2. The province has put a cap on attendance at religious services in order to allow for physical distancing. The cap is 30% of the capacity of the space. We are fortunate that the space at Leo Baeck is quite large, and we have set our maximum number at 80, which is below what we are allowed.
3. We ask anyone who wishes to attend to pre-register by Friday noon of each week. All registrants will receive an email on the Friday before services which will include a COVID-19 self-assessment screen. This approach allows us to control numbers, maximize safety and assist with contact tracing should it be needed. By registering to attend Shabbat services, you are agreeing to abide by and follow all our protocols.
4. While family and children's services and programming are currently suspended, we encourage families to register and attend regular services. There is no minimum age for attendees. All children, like everyone, are expected to wear a mask and stay with their family to maintain the minimum safe 2 metres distance from others. Although we cannot lend out the shul's books or toys due to Public Health guidelines, families are welcome (and encouraged!) to bring (and take back home) one or two of their own quiet, age- and Shabbat-appropriate activities, toys or books. Ultimately, you know your children best: we trust you to attend only if you feel that your family can comfortably and reliably abide by all guidelines set forth in this document.
5. Doors to Leo Baeck will open at 9:30 am so that attendees are comfortably in the sanctuary when the service begins. Ushers will greet you on entering the building, and will verify your attendance, so that the attendance list is accurate. We are obliged by Leo Baeck to have a uniformed security person at the door as well, monitoring access. Please wear a mask when you are lining up to enter the building, and while you are in the building for services. Please use the hand sanitizer which will be provided.
6. Seating in the sanctuary will be spaced 2 metres apart. If you attend as a family or are in the same bubble then you may move your chairs together.
7. Please bring (and take back home) your own Siddur, Kippah and Tallit each time you attend, as these items will not be available. No personal items should be left at Leo Baeck. If you would like to purchase your own copy of the Lev Shalem siddur, please let the office know. There are some new copies available for purchase. Alternatively, we can send you a pdf for you to print at home. We encourage you to keep your printed copy so that we aren't increasing environmental waste. If you want to dispose of your copy it must be buried.
8. An usher will direct departure when the service is over so that we can keep our distance and exit in a safe way. Individuals must maintain a safe distance (at least 2 metres) upon exiting. Please follow the instructions of the volunteer providing directions.

9. One person or family will be allowed in a washroom at a time. In addition to washing your hands, please use hand sanitizer when you re-enter the sanctuary.
10. Hygiene practices (coughing and sneezing etiquette, hand hygiene) should be observed and hand sanitizer use is encouraged.
11. We are grateful that Leo Baeck will increase the frequency of cleaning of surfaces that are touched in the sanctuary, but please touch as little as possible and not beyond the seat in which you sit.
12. The Shabbat service will be substantially abbreviated. We will finish in 90 minutes. The first part of the service, Pesukei dezimra, will be omitted, as will the repetition of the Amidah. Only one aliyah of Torah will be chanted, and the haftarah will also be abbreviated. The service leader will sing, but congregants are asked not to sing along because of the danger of droplets. Soft humming, with closed lips may be allowed. We will include the major prayers and a dvar torah each week.

The public health situation is constantly evolving and we know that we will have to be nimble with our plans going forward. Please watch Narayever Net for any updates. We know that these protocols will mean a very different Narayever Shabbat service than we are used to. We hope that in time we will be able to modify or eliminate some of the protocols, but for now we are asking all attendees at the service to follow them regardless of your personal practices outside shul.

The Narayever remains a committed Jewish community, and we can still create a haymische atmosphere for services while following protocols to keep us safe. We look forward to offering a joyful and spiritual experience for those in attendance. Please join us if you are able.

Be safe and remain healthy!

Resumption of Services Committee

Phyllis Berck, Chair

Dr. Anne Matlow

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