

To our Temple Beth Tikvah Community

We hope this letter finds you and your loved ones healthy, cared for, and nourished during these challenging days. From health issues to economic insecurity to loneliness, we recognize how trying these times can be. First and foremost, we are here for you and hope you are well.

In March, a congregational Coronavirus Task Force was established to advise our Officers and Clergy on best practices based on recommendations from medical professionals, public health organizations, and the Jewish values of *Chesed*, *Pikuah Nefesh* and *Kol Aravim Zeh I'Zeh*.¹ Amidst constantly changing circumstances, our focus has and continues to remain on keeping our members, staff, and clergy safe and healthy, and contributing to the health of our broader community. **With our core Jewish values and the best available medical advice in mind, we determined that all but essential Temple operations would remain off-site at least through the end of July.**

During this time, TBT has strived to provide opportunities for meaningful connection and sacred encounter, including a virtual Mitzvah Day, the Summer Concert series aimed at bringing wonderful musicians into your living rooms, and the multitude of learning and engagement programs featuring scholars from across the globe. We recently partnered with JewIt@Home, a national co-op of Jewish activities and programs for people of every age, interest and life stage. We continue to worship together on Shabbat and holidays and the Rabbi and Cantor work together to meet the pastoral needs of our community. If you have not had the opportunity to take advantage of the myriad of digital offerings, we hope you will do so soon.

Even with all the tremendous digital opportunities, many have been asking “when will the synagogue reopen for in-person gatherings? In keeping with our Jewish values, the task force made the following recommendations:

- In-person sanctuary B'nai Mitzvah services will begin at the end of July. Based upon our seating capacity, at this time we will welcome up to 30 persons per service. All individuals will be expected to wear masks, social distance, and abide by all protective procedures we have deemed important.
- In August, we hope to open the sanctuary to congregational members to “reserve” a seat for Shabbat services, either Friday evening or Shabbat morning. With keeping to a limited number of persons gathering, *we will continue to stream Friday evening and Shabbat morning services for all to participate through the digital medium.*
- The ECEC will open with a small cohort of TBT children for summer camp, as they prepare to welcome back students for fall classes in late August.
- K-7 Religious School Opening Day will take place on August 16, with a *Drive-In Celebration*. Plans are in the works for a hybrid program for the 2020-2021 academic year, combining small in-person learning cohorts, family enrichment activities and virtual classrooms. We are looking forward to seeing our students and getting back to the programming they enjoy, with the necessary modifications to ensure their health and safety.
- KiCKS educational programming will begin following the High Holy Days with some informal social activities in August.

What about High Holy Days? Based upon the increasing numbers of COVID infections, it has been projected that September will be too soon to safely welcome large numbers of people into the building. For this reason, **High Holy Days 5781 will look slightly different.** We will observe the sacred time from Elul through Simchat Torah in a variety of new ways: online, in-home, and safety-controlled, limited audience in-person prayer and ritual happenings held at the synagogue or outdoor venues around Roswell. **We are developing a broad and creative plan for engaging our entire congregation in a multitude of ways.** As these plans unfold, you will hear more about them in future congregational communications.

Meanwhile, if you have thoughts, questions or concerns about the High Holy Days, or about anything related to TBT's response to the coronavirus, we welcome your input.



¹ *Chesed*: Loving kindness, *Pikuah Nefesh*: Preservation of Life, *Kol Aravim Zeh I'Zeh*: We are each responsible for the safety and security of one another