

Temple Beth Tikvah's Updated Response to COVID-19

Matzil nefesh echad k'ilu matzil olam u'mlo'o

"Save a life, you save a whole world."

March 12, 2020

16 Adar 5780

Dear Temple Beth Tikvah Family,

It is with an abundance of caution and a heavy heart that we write this letter.

We are all aware of the rapid spread and potential threat posed by the Coronavirus, COVID-19. While we have not been informed that anyone at Temple Beth Tikvah has been exposed or tested positive for COVID-19, after consultation with health experts and our leadership, we are making decisions ahead of exposure to limit risk to our congregants. One of the hardest things about this moment is that it is rapidly evolving, and we are in a constantly reactive posture. This is hard on everyone. And just as a contagious virus can spread, so can fear. We are taking a proactive stance to keep our community healthy. All medical and epidemiological expertise recommend that the best course of action for ourselves and for others is to avoid large social gatherings. Keeping to small groups not only keeps us safer from contagion, but also prevents the wider spread of this deadly disease.

Since our ancestral times, Judaism has literally entailed sacrifice. While we no longer make the sacrifices commanded by the book of Leviticus, we are called upon today as a religious community to sacrifice many of the events and opportunities we so eagerly awaited for the sake of public health. That is why, for the time being, **Temple Beth Tikvah will be postponing the majority of congregational activities until after Passover and Spring Break.** As events evolve, we will continue to be in touch with you about our community schedule beyond that time.

Please remember, the mitzvah of *Pikuah Nefesh*, the safeguarding of a life, allows for modification of our rituals and behaviors.

Thus the remainder of this letter will explain the details of how we anticipate Temple Beth Tikvah's community will function during this bizarre and ever-changing time.

****PLEASE CLICK ON THE DOCUMENT TO READ THE ENTIRE MESSAGE****



Shabbat and Festival Services

Beginning today, in-person, communal worship will shift to virtual religious services via our live-stream on our website (www.bethtikvah.com) and/or our Facebook page (<https://www.facebook.com/TempleBethTikvah/>). Anyone remembering a loved one will hear their relative's name recited. If a member wishes to postpone the reading of a loved one's name until we resume in-person, communal worship, contact the synagogue office and speak with **Kim Weindorf** 770-642-0434 or email her at kim@bethtikvah.com

*Those who wish to follow the service may download a free copy of Mishkan Tefillah (<https://www.ccarnet.org/publications/mishkan-tfilah-for-shabbat/>)

Lifecycle Events At this time **life cycle events will take place** with clergy officiation, but will be considered private functions; these include baby namings, britot, bar/bat mitzvah, wedding and funerals

Congregational Programming

All presently scheduled programs: Casino Night & the March Scholar Weekend are postponed, dates TBD. All Adult Learning including Torah Study (BLT), Melton, Adult Hebrew, Machlochet Matters & Senior lunch are cancelled until further notice. We are working to provide streaming options for learning and will keep you informed about our progress.

Religious School and ECEC Preschool classes are cancelled until further notice. Please feel free to reach out to our school directors about enrichment opportunities and next steps.

Auxiliary Groups

Leadership among TBT's wonderful auxiliary programs including Sisterhood, Brotherhood and HOTTY will be in touch with their constituents regarding protocol.

*Affinity Groups and Chavurot are self-led and will determine their own protocol

Committees and Working Groups

Many of our TBT members are involved in building for our present and future through committees and working groups. **We will attempt to make our upcoming meetings the "virtual" variety**, where people can participate by video from their home computer. The coordinators of those smaller meetings will reach out to their partners to work out the specifics of those details.

The office at TBT will continue to be open: we will be answering phones and emails, and here to talk with you. We will also continue to update the congregation as events unfold.



Your clergy remain available to you for pastoral counsel and conversation, please call the office to reach either Rabbi Shuval-Weiner or Cantor Kassel.

Hospital Visits

Due to the sensitive condition of those who are hospitalized, *chesed visits* will become *chesed check-ins* and take place via phone and Facetime.

We invite you to be in touch with us and with one another and to continue to connect with one another via the Temple Beth Tikvah FB page. These days will pass and we will get back to normal, it will just take time before this pandemic is under control. Until then, let's be sure to remember that no matter how far apart we are, we are all here to offer support and love to one another. **We are ALL Temple Beth Tikvah- a Community of Hope.**

Shalom, re'fuah u'vracha- wishing you peace, health and many blessings as we navigate the weeks ahead.

Alexandria Shuval-Weiner, Senior Rabbi
Rhonda Povlot, President, Temple Beth Tikvah
Joseph Dunn, President Elect