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Updates to Kol Ami Services 3/20/2020

Shalom, Kol Ami!

I am here with a new update regarding how we will pray together during this time as we try to "Flatten the curve". When we made the decision last week to livestream all services with just one person in the room, it was a quick response to the pandemic based on conversations with other rabbis across world. Now that we've had more time to study some sources and think about the values that we hold when we pray, the Committee on Jewish Law and

Standards have updated their guidance on the issue of praying with a minyan.

In the case of livestreaming, the only way to know how many "people" are watching (or rather how many computers are logged on) is to log into a website. We see a number that identifies the computer and the city it is logged on from. Our classic Jewish sources require that a minyan be in one physical space. However, the Shulhan Arukh talks about the possibility of having an exception to this as long as one can see the faces of the other participants. He goes so far as to say that someone could be behind the synagogue with a window between them, as long as they show their face to the others, they can be counted. Several commentators have expanded on this, with even recent orthodox rabbis leaning on this position to say that we should allow a minyan over the internet as long as one sees and hears each other in real time.

This is considered a lenient position and should only be used in what we call *Sha'at haDehak*, a crisis situation. Because of these circumstances, we moved to livestream, but I think we need more than just knowing that a certain number of computers are logged on to our website. **For this reason, we are moving our minyan to a computer program called Zoom. Zoom is a video conferencing system where users can hear and see each other in real time.** With Zoom, we will be able to see each person in the minyan, hear their responses to the barchu, and say amen to kaddish. We can chat with each other before and after and allow someone observing a yartzeit to share their memories directly.

Using Zoom is easy! You can use it on any device that has a camera and microphone - computer, tablet, ipad, or smartphone. There are individual links for each minyan, program, or meeting. Click the link for that event and the website will pop up. It may ask you to download the program (I always like to test the link in advance) or you can join from the web browser, it will help you test your audio and video and then once the "host" of the meeting has opened the call, you will be able to enter. **I will do a quick Zoom tutorial on how to use the platform before minyan at 9am on Sunday morning.**

I understand this is a new concept *halakhically*, according to Jewish law, for all of us. This *sha'at hadehak*, crisis situation, where we are practicing social distancing and limits of numbers of people in a room requires new and creative thinking. I appreciate your patience and understanding as we navigate this new, but hopefully, very temporary experience.

To see a video on how to join a zoom meeting, click here:
<https://support.zoom.us/hc/en-us/articles/201362193-How-Do-I-Join-A-Meeting->

If you would like to do a test call with me, sign up for a time slot by clicking on this link: <https://calendly.com/rabbiblatt/zoom-test>
(More times will be added during the week for evening minyan times)

To join our Sunday Morning Minyan:

Multiple ways to join:

- Click on the following link: <https://zoom.us/j/661453821>
- Go to Zoom.com or open the Zoom app and enter Meeting ID: 661 453 821
- You can still join us via livestream from the Kol Ami website however you will not be able to interact with the minyan.

This will always be the link for Sunday morning minyan!

To join our Weekday Evening Minyan:

Multiple ways to join:

- Click on the following link: <https://zoom.us/j/502257197>
- Go to Zoom.com or open the Zoom app and enter Meeting ID: 502 257 197
- You can still join us via livestream from the Kol Ami website however you will not be able to interact with the minyan.

This will always be the link for weekday evening minyan!

Shabbat Services

Because we are unable to use the Zoom program on Shabbat, we will continue live stream services from the Sanctuary. We may invite those who are able to join us to make a minyan so that we can include Torah reading. Since we cannot check to see how many are joining in the livestream, if there is not a minyan, we will not do a formal Torah reading, but instead will

read from the Tikkun with the blessing for studying Torah. According to the CDC guidelines and Hillsborough County Orders, we may only have 10 people in a room at a time and we ask that everyone keep the appropriate 6 feet of space between. This Shabbat we have 10 people signed up to be in the room and participating in the service. If you are healthy, low risk, and would like to participate by reading Torah or leading a service in future weeks, please email me at rabbiblatt@kolami.org.

Siddurim

I will call pages from both the Siddur Sim Shalom (blue book) and from the new Lev Shalem. *If you would like to pick up a Siddur Sim Shalom, you can do so from Kol Ami Monday through Friday between 8am and 1pm.*

You can print copies of the Siddur here:

[Lev Shalem Kabbalat Shabbat](#)

[Lev Shalem Shabbat Morning](#)

[Sim Shalom Weekday Ma'ariv](#)

[Sim Shalom Weekday Shacharit](#)

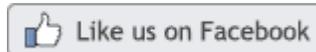
[You can find pages for our Torah Portion in the Chumash here](#)

[You can find pages for the Haftorah here.](#)

Shabbat Shalom!
Rabbi Blatt



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