

July 19, 2020 / 27 Tammuz, 5780

Dear members and friends of Temple Beth-El,

The TBE Board has been feeling as poignantly as the rest of our community the isolation and disruption occasioned by the need to close our synagogue during the COVID-19 crisis. As the intensity of the pandemic has waned in New York State, making it possible to consider a limited and phased re-opening, the TBE Reopening Task Force, consisting of the individuals named below, has been meeting to formulate guidelines for reopening the synagogue.

The task force's mandate is to find ways to resume TBE's in-person operations in an organized and thoughtful manner that best serves the community's needs while complying with the state's reopening regulations and guidance. We are also taking on the suggestions of the USCJ's Cross-Movement Re-Opening Committee which, drawing on both medical and Jewish sources, has advised caution in the pace and extent of re-opening, particularly with respect to ritual activity.

The task force has made the following recommendations, which have been approved by the Temple Beth-El Board of Directors:

1. Open the Temple office, bring our secretary Jane Griffith back full-time, and allow people to come in by **appointment only**. Jane may be contacted at secretary@tbeithaca.org or 607 273-5775.
2. Open the mikveh for use by **appointment only**, with an attendant present for cleaning and sanitizing touch surfaces between uses. To arrange an appointment please contact Rabbi Brody at director@tbeithaca.org.
3. Allow the B'Yachad Ithaca Jewish Preschool to have limited 1-hour play dates in the backyard, with access to the bathrooms in the Social Hall of the Temple.
4. Allow Rabbi Brody to begin planning for a fall opening of B'Yachad.

In order for our re-opening efforts to be successful and to proceed without need for reversals, we need for all members and visitors to comply with the policies that we are putting in place. This includes limiting the number of visits to the building to a minimum, effectively limiting to the following: essential administrative tasks, scheduled use of the mikveh or visits with clergy for life-cycle matters, and a handful of courtyard gatherings for our preschoolers (who are least able to take advantage of virtual gatherings).

Signage has been posted at each entrance stating that visitors must wear a face mask and maintain social distancing. There will be hand sanitizer at each entrance. Upon entry to the building, each visitor will be asked a series of questions about their health and exposure to COVID-19. All visitors will be logged with date of visit, name, email, and phone number. We also ask that you **not** come to the Temple if you are experiencing any symptoms or are in close contact with anyone having symptoms. Should you develop COVID-like symptoms, or someone with whom you are in contact receives a positive COVID test result within three days of your entering the building, you must immediately call the synagogue office to initiate contact tracing.

Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation. Please do not hesitate to email us if there are any questions or concerns.

With best wishes for a healthy and safe summer,

Linda Aigen and David Weiner
Co-Presidents, Temple Beth-El

Email: president@tbeithaca.org

Members of the TBE Re-Opening task force (listed by the committees they represent):

Medical Advisory Team – Dan Maas
Religious School and B'Yachad – Rabbi Suzanne Brody
Ritual Committee – Roy Luft
House Committee – Jerry Dietz
Clergy – Rabbi Rachel Safman
Co-Presidents – Linda Aigen and David Weiner