



Dor Tikvah Committee for Safe Congregational Services Update - Dec. 2020

We are reaching out to provide you with a brief update from the Dor Tikvah Committee for Safe Congregational Services as we head into the Chanukah holiday and as we look toward the final weeks of 2020.

Our Committee continues to meet on a weekly basis to assess the trends in the number of new Covid-19 cases in Charleston County. We remain in close communication with local medical professionals and we continue to track the number of new Covid-19 cases as well as hospital capacities.

Recap of our synagogue practices to this point:

Following the Covid-19 lockdown in the Spring of 2020, the congregation began holding outdoor services in late June. Active Covid-19 infections peaked in July, and then began declining. Towards the end of Summer, the congregation was able to transition, holding outdoor and indoor services for the High Holy Days and continuing with indoor services through Sukkot. In the face of the difficulties presented by the pandemic, this phase of the year was very meaningfully accomplished with a great deal of thought and hard work, most of which may be attributed to the dedication and commitment of Rabbi Davies.

Based on the above experience and the level of participation by the membership, services have since been held indoors in the main sanctuary on Shabbat only, with continued attention to the Covid-19 Safety Rules, which are posted on the Dor Tikvah [webpage](#).

Current Local Covid-19 Trends:

With Winter here, we thus far have not had any Covid-19 exposures within the Shul, but remain vigilant. The committee's current assessment is as follows:

In Charleston County, it is estimated that 1.9% of people have active Covid-19 infection. This increased slightly over the last week, but is only about 1/3 of the peak in July.

At the state and national level, active Covid-19 infections have increased at a more worrying pace. In South Carolina, new Covid-19 cases (based on a 7 day average) are higher than during the peak in July. This increasing state trend may begin to make its way into Charleston County in the weeks ahead.

The committee will continue to monitor the community Covid-19 infection activity and advise the board. **At this time, our medical advisors believe that we can continue to safely convene indoor services with the proper protections in place.**

As regards some recent changes in CDC Covid-19 quarantine and testing recommendations, the committee holds that the largely economic considerations being addressed through the new CDC recommendations do not apply to our congregation. As we go through the expected increase in Covid-19 infections through the winter, we have recommended continued adherence to the longer 14 day waiting period for people exposed to high risk settings as the safest standard to follow.

Chanukah Opportunities:

As limited as our in-person interactions are at the moment, there are a number of other ways in which we can still connect. As we begin Chanukah, there are a number of ways to engage over the course of the Holiday of Lights. Rabbis Davies and Hoberman will be sharing words of Torah and inspiration on their shared [WhatsApp Chanukah Group](#). We will be gathering together on Saturday night, December 12th, to light candles together and there will be doughnuts and latkes for all. Please note that this event will be drive-up only and all food will be brought to your cars by individuals wearing masks and gloves. You can register for the event here - www.dortikvah.org/event/ChanukahDT. There will also be virtual classes offered for kids, teens, and adults - please see our Chanukah announcements for more details - www.dortikvah.org/chanukah-5781.

Other Opportunities:

The Rabbi continues to hold post Shabbat Zoom/Facebook Live get togethers ([Zoom link here](#) Password: 085081), and our regular weekday classes continue on virtual platforms. In addition, please let us know if there is anything that you are in need of that your Dor Tikvah family may be able to assist you with. We are all here for each other as we continue to navigate these trying times.