



Dear Friends,

Let me start by wishing you all a *Chodesh Tov* (a good month) and, a little in advance, a *Chag Kasher VeSame'ach*, a Happy and Healthy Passover! We are all adjusting to our new realities and it is fairly clear at this point that social distancing requirements will impact our Passover celebration in a significant way. Before we get into the details, I would just point out an interesting fact – the Passover Seder as we know it was actually formed during difficult times, and offers us special comfort as we confront our own personal challenges today.

There are **important details leading up to Passover** in this email. Please take the time to read through it carefully and plan accordingly.

First of all, I want you to know that I continue to think of you all from physical distance but a place of closeness nonetheless. We begin, as the Psalmist advises us, with *Sur MeiRa* (removing the negative) and then on to the *Asei Tov* (what we can and should do positively).

I am issuing the following for the safety of each and every member of our synagogue community as well as the Charleston community as a whole, as part of our Torah obligation of *Hatzalat Nefashot* (saving lives):

**No one here in Charleston should host any guests from out of town for Passover or other family celebrations. Everyone must plan to celebrate Passover in their current locations.**

At this point, there are active cases of COVID-19 in Jewish communities across the world. Hosting out of town guests will threaten the lives of those here by potentially introducing COVID-19 into the Charleston Jewish community and can result in otherwise preventable illness and death. COVID-19 can have asymptomatic spread so even family and friends who feel well can spread the virus.

**Guests who are scheduled to come to Charleston must be told immediately that they may not enter our community.**

As the Orthodox Union and other major national Orthodox organizations have expressed in a statement earlier this week “Travel to other cities must be cancelled, whether to vacation venues (Florida etc.) or to family.”

**Family members who arrived here from out of town already must be quarantined for 14 days.**

These individuals should practice separation for 14 days in the family home. They should not go shopping or venture out into the community until they have been home and symptom-free for 14 days. They should not be meeting up with friends.

**You should not leave for any other community for Passover, family celebrations or any other reason.**

Rabbis in many other communities are also asking people not to come. We need to protect our families, our community, and other communities as well. Visiting another community risks introducing the virus in our community upon your return.

**One should not invite guests locally for Shabbat and Holiday meals, including the Seder. One should not accept invitations for such hospitality either.**

If there are extreme extenuating circumstances, please contact me and we will consult with appropriate medical professionals as necessary.

**It is essential that we continue maintaining proper social distancing.**

People should not be gathering together in one another's homes. If people go for walks outside, they should be cognizant of appropriate social

distancing (at least six feet) from one another. It is a parent's responsibility to teach and enforce this for his or her children.

**If you believe there is an emergency situation requiring travel, please consult with appropriate medical professionals as necessary.**

We recognize that this will create difficulties, disappointment, and challenges as it relates to our celebration of Passover. Please do not hesitate to reach out to me with questions or for guidance as it relates to observing Passover this year.

**We have the opportunity and obligation to sanctify Hashem's name by treasuring the gift of life in fulfilling the paramount mitzvah of *Pikuach Nefesh* (saving a life).** I beseech you to do the right and responsible thing.

And now onto the *Asei Tov* (the positives) –

Due to the limitations we are now dealing with, **Dining In has extended their Passover order deadline to this Friday, March 27th** to accommodate changing Seder/Passover plans.

[Click here to order Passover food.](#)

[Click here to reserve your Passover fried chicken.](#)

[Click here to request delivery.](#)

You can also email [marcieschallah@gmail.com](mailto:marcieschallah@gmail.com) or call 843-763-8160 if you want to have your order delivered!

We have a dedicated group of volunteers who have expressed interest in assisting those who need help with grocery pickup and other errands. **If you are in need of assistance or would like to volunteer**, please be in touch with Ora at [oradavies@gmail.com](mailto:oradavies@gmail.com). Of course, this year we are also collecting funds for *Maot Chittim* (Passover Charity) - you can donate through the Shul website, please make sure to note that your donation is for this purpose.

**Don't forget to sell your Chametz before Pesach!** Be sure to sign [this form](#) and get it back to me by the latest Erev Pesach, Wednesday, April 8th at 9:00am. Due to social distancing, and based on the *Psak* of Rabbi Herschel Schachter, we will not be doing *Kinyan Sudar* (lifting the pen/cellphone) this year. The easiest way to get the form to me is to print it, fill it out, take a picture of it, and send it back to me.

Rabbi Allen Schwartz of Congregation Ohab Zedek in Manhattan received a notice from the Belzer Rebbe in Israel that families should not clean for Passover until a few days before the holiday, and then to **clean enough** so that there is no chametz in front of us that we may inadvertently eat. The nullification of chametz that we make on Erev Pesach will qualify for all of the deep cleaning we usually do.

More information about Erev Pesach and our Pesach Schedule will be coming soon.

This year we will be doing a lot of things for the first time. We're good at this. We've had to adjust ourselves to new situations many times in our history. Even if our Shuls cannot be a physical gathering place for us, they can still function profoundly as centers of tradition and kindness as we find ways to adjust to our new circumstances. We will emerge from this stronger, and better, and it will happen sooner, again, if we all follow safety protocols. Right now safety is our most important focus.

One final thought from Rabbi Dr. Ari Berman, President of Yeshiva University - There is a difference between being alone and feeling alone. While each one of us sits physically separate from each other, we are not alone. We are all in this together and I am here for you. Please reach out to me with any questions, concerns, or just to talk.

Wishing each and every one of you only the very best in this difficult time,  
Rabbi Michael Davies