



August 9, 2021

Re: COVID-19 Summer Update

Dear CBE family:

As you know we continue to face unprecedented times considering the lingering effects of the pandemic. During these past few weeks, the Beth Emeth Clergy, Board of Trustees, COVID Task Force and staff continued to work diligently keeping two main goals in mind. The **first** centered on our reopening; our first in person Shabbat, our welcoming of Cantor Kohn with services and dinner, and our planning for our High Holy Day services. These High Holy Day preparations are something we so look forward to every year, and we remain committed to making sure we do so for the collective benefit of our entire CBE community. Our **second** goal is ensuring our reopening continues to be done in the safest way possible with compassion and care. The Jewish ethic, *pikuach nefesh*, “the value of protecting human life and well-being,” is an enormous undertaking in these constantly changing times. As we look forward, we are profoundly grateful that our CBE family has been a part of helping with the rollout of the COVID-19 vaccine education and facilitation of appointments and vaccine access. While we hoped to be at the end of the pandemic by this time, it is clear we are not quite there yet, and thus, the CDC and others recommend that masking is still required in public gathering places, such as our Temple, even for those fully vaccinated.

In following the CDC, New York State and Albany County recommendations beginning on Monday, August 9, all people entering 100 Academy Road, will be required to show proof of vaccination. In addition, everyone entering the building must remain masked at all times, except in limited circumstances as designated on the Bimah. We will no longer be doing temperature checks at the door but ask that folks stay home if they have a fever or feel sick. Our LIVE STREAM is always an option for those who are not vaccinated or simply wish to remain at home.

The Excelsior Pass is a simple way to store and show your vaccination. (Learn more at epass.ny.gov) If you decide to register with Excelsior Pass, we will easily be able to scan your pass when you arrive at CBE. If you don't have access to a smart phone, you can show us your vaccination card or copy of the card prior to entry into the building.

While we are planning this next phase for in-person services for fully vaccinated members, we are very aware that much still depends on the coronavirus infection levels. Please know that we are continuously watching, planning, and modifying as we deem appropriate and necessary to do so. We will be updating our finalized High Holy Day services plans in the coming weeks and will share the relevant information as soon as we are able.

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Last year we were filled with limitations. We are all exhausted from the pandemic and feeling sad and frustrated by the seeming endlessness of the situation. However, we are mindful that we came together as a Beth Emeth community and will continue to do so. As a community we will work within the COVID-19 guidelines to make our Beth Emeth home as comfortable as we can make it within the necessary safety protocols.

On behalf of the Clergy, Board, Task Force, and staff of Beth Emeth, we are eternally grateful for the patience, support and strength that you have shown to us and each other during these last 18 months. Please continue to keep your eye out for our Thursday night emails, as well as updates on our High Holy Day page on our website. Our September BULLETIN will be virtual (emailed) so it may contain the most up to date information. It can be available to be mailed to anyone who cannot access it online. High Holy Day tickets are on schedule to go in the mail mid-August. If you ever have any questions or concerns, don't hesitate to call the office at 518.436.9761. We are here, *masked for now*, ready and happy to help you in any way possible.

Wishing you and your families a safe, and enjoyable last month of summer.



Rabbi Scott Shpeen



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