COVID-19 Response Update From TI Leadership 3/13/2020

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So much has changed in a week. As the coronavirus has emerged in our area and throughout the country, it is clear that we need to do more to help everyone in our community stay healthy. We are fortunate that our congregation includes experts in infectious disease and public health. We have convened an advisory group, including TI health experts, members of the Executive Committee, and staff, to guide the actions we take to stop the spread of disease.

This advisory group has concluded that for the sake of each of us in the congregation as well as for the sake of the community at large, starting immediately, we are closing the building for the next two weeks. There will be no community gatherings, including our regular services and classes, during this time. We will revisit this decision next week, and as often as necessary, as we keep apprised of this rapidly changing situation.

The Himmelfarb School will be closed at least through March 31, in line with schools in the District of Columbia and the State of Maryland. As previously explained, we are following our current school closing policy, which calls for our school to be closed when DC or Montgomery County schools close. We will continue to monitor school closings in these jurisdictions, and prior to March 31, we will be reassessing the situation and making adjustments as necessary.

We recognize that this is a very big sacrifice for the congregation to make. It is vitally important for us to stay connected, to be in community, to share prayer and learning, to celebrate and mourn together. We are exploring ways we can do that without physically together. We are exploring ways we can do that without physically gathering together at TI, such as live-streaming and virtual gatherings for classes, book groups, and other small group events and activities. We also need to stay connected so we can be there for each other.

Many of us are staying home because of COVID-19. That can be lonely. And it can also lead to hardship if supplies are needed and no one in the household can go out. We would like to keep
Tiers connected during this period. If you are home because of elevated risk factors, self-isolation, or quarantine, or if you are willing to call Tiers who are stuck at home or drop off supplies to people shut in near you, please let us know here. TI's Helping Hands will try to match up people within the community.

We hope we will be able to get back to business as usual at TI soon. But our first priority is “pikuah nefesh” - saving lives - and the health and wellbeing of everyone in the congregation.

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