

COVID-19 Announcements

The following announcements have been provided by the President of the Board and the Rabbi.

From the President of the Board, March 13, 2020:

An Important B'nai Chaim Announcement Regarding COVID-19: Cancellation of Events

Dear Fellow Congregants,

All of us have many concerns and questions about the COVID-19 virus and how its spread is exacerbated by social interactions. Religious institutions across the country are assessing whether it is wise to hold religious events during this health crisis. The Board of Directors of B'nai Chaim met Wednesday night and came to the conclusion that it is best to cancel all religious school and other classes, services, walk and talk, and other events. These cancellations will extend through April 15, at which time we will reassess the situation.

The CDC and all health experts we have heard say that cancelling school and religious services BEFORE any cases show up in the institution is the only way to slow the spread of the virus. Once an infection shows up, it is likely that others will have already been infected. We also took into account that many of our congregants that come to religious services are in the most vulnerable older age group, and that children can easily spread disease with their close social interactions. We do not take this step lightly. We are dealing, not just with the health of our congregation, but with the health of the community at large. Our board is made up of a broad cross-section of our congregation, and we were unanimous in making this difficult decision.

Rabbi Kim will, of course be available for her usual pastoral duties. Please contact her, me, or Sandy Solove (office@bnaichaim.org) if you have any further questions. Thank you for your understanding.

Buddy Schweig
President

From the Rabbi, March 13, 2020:

Maintaining community

Shalom, dear friends!

We have been thrust into an unprecedented time of uncertainty and fear, and potentially food insecurity and loneliness. As we will not be gathering together, seeing each other's smiling faces, shaking hands, or hugging, we must seek new ways to come together.

To this end, we will do as much as we can virtually and by phone. I will be making my first attempts at creating videos / live-streaming for keeping in touch, sharing information, and providing learning and worship experiences. This is definitely NOT in my comfort zone, as I need the interaction with others to do my best, but maybe Brian can be my congregation. Today he and I will record a video of Shabbat blessings, songs, and some Torah insights that I will email and post to our Congregation B'nai Chaim Facebook page. Please "LIKE" our page to have access. I post quite a few things of interest there that aren't necessarily sent in an email.

We have some congregants with compromised immune systems, some who are elderly, some who are food insecure, and some who meet all of these criteria, who will be in great need of our help over these coming weeks. I would like for us to take them into our hearts and reach out to help them. Below you will find the names of some of our folks of whom I'm thinking. Please reach out to them. They need to know that they are not alone and that we are thinking of them. I've put an asterisk by those with the most need of food and supplies. Actual face-to-face contact is probably not advised, but just surprising them with a small bag of staples and a couple goodies, sending a little "thinking of you" card, or making a brief phone call will do a lot to boost their spirits and their pantries. (If bringing by food, which is really a necessity for some, please call ahead and let them know you'll be dropping it by their door.)

[Contact Rabbi Harris for the list of congregants.]

The next few weeks will be hard for all of us in a variety of ways, but we will get through it with love and hope and showing care for one another. If you know of others of our congregants or a family member who should be on this list, please don't hesitate to let me know. Of course, I will always be available for you if you need me. Feel free to call or email anytime.

Much love to all of you and Shabbat Shalom!

Rabbi Kim