



June 11 | 19 Sivan

Dear Friends,

As the reopening of the Commonwealth reaches Phase 2, Temple Israel's lay-leadership, clergy, and staff have continued to reflect on our congregation's best and safest path forward. We are challenged to balance two Jewish principles: *Kavod HaTzibbur*—our reverence for the quality of our communal life, which makes us want to be together in-person; and *Pikuah Nefesh*—our obligation to protect our own and others' lives, which places front and center the health obstacles that in-person worship or other programs present.

To develop Temple Israel's plan for reopening, we have convened a task force comprised of our clergy, executive staff, and a team of Temple Israel members representing diverse constituencies and relevant expertise (ranging from health care to building systems; for task force membership, see below).

We understand that you need to know what plans are in place for our safe return to our building. At the same time, any plans we make must respond to congregational interests and needs. What will make *you* feel safe in our building? What programs, for worship or otherwise, are you interested in seeing us institute when we, at a future point, reach the first stages of our return to the building? What do you want and need from Temple Israel? Our task force will determine the policies and procedures that must be in place before we consider any in-person programming; will assure that everything we do complies with Commonwealth guidelines and best practices; will determine what in-person programming best suits our needs; will decide when such programming may be initiated; and, most important, will open and maintain two-way lines of communication with the community.

To initiate these lines of communication, we hope you will complete our survey, a link to which appears below. We want to know what kinds of programs, virtual and in-person, interest you and what you would like Temple Israel to do to meet your needs during the pandemic.

At this time, based on governmental requirements and expert advice, our reopening task force has begun to outline some of the policies we will have in place upon reopening. These include:

- All worship services and other programs will require advance sign-up and self-health assessment.
- Because of space and other considerations, attendance at in-person programs will necessarily be limited.
- We will require masks of all who attend. For the safety of all, we will need to exclude those who for any reason cannot wear a mask.

- As required by state guidelines, we will provide access to running water for hand-washing. At the same time, in everyone's best interests, water fountains will be closed, and we expect bathrooms to be used only as is absolutely necessary. With this in mind and for other health reasons, we expect all initial in-person worship and programs to be of relatively short duration.
- Whether inside or out, we will strictly adhere to all guidelines for social distancing and will organize space to prevent congestion in aisles and doorways.
- We will scrupulously follow guidelines for sanitizing surfaces between programs.

Alongside these initial policies, much is left to be considered. Because of the issues created by singing (both the cantor's and congregants') we are evaluating how we can safely run in-person worship services, whether in the building or outside. Most important, until we have a better picture of the impact of Phase 2 openings on the trend of COVID-19 cases in Massachusetts, we believe it is too early definitively to decide when we can open our building or grounds for any in-person programs, even though we do hope to open as soon as we can do so safely.

Please fill out our survey and help us make plans that work for you. If you have additional concerns or ideas that you want to convey directly to our reopening task force, please feel free to be in touch (president@tiofnatick.org). We are in this together, and our strength comes from our working together to achieve what is best for our community. Thank you for your help in that.

B'Shalom,

Alan Avery-Peck, President
Rabbi Daniel Liben

[PLEASE ACCESS OUR SURVEY HERE.](#)

[FOR A ROSTER OF MEMBERS OF OUR TASK FORCE, CLICK HERE.](#)

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