

TERS Message

April 2020

Just a couple of weeks ago, life was very different for our students, families and fellow Americans. It is astonishing how quickly we all needed to adjust to news of the spreading coronavirus, but we are committed to doing what we can to help keep everyone as healthy and safe as possible. We also very much want our religious school children and families to be able to stay connected with each other, to continue to learn and practice Hebrew, and share as much as we can as a Jewish community. We will be in touch with ways for us to do this.

Some thank yous...We are grateful to several people who helped to make March a very productive and fun month of learning for our religious school students. Thank you to Marlene Yahalom of Yad Vashem, the World Holocaust Remembrance Center, for her enlightening presentation through a mobile museum exhibit to our 7th and 8th graders about the children who survived The Holocaust. We are also grateful to Judy Mann, who shared stories about her work with the New London Meal Center and Homeless Hospitality Center to our 3rd through 8th graders. The children were very engaged and asked many thoughtful questions. Thank you also to the 4th graders and their families for participating in the Shabbat service on Friday, March 6. (Photos below)

Special thanks to **Barbara Senges** for her personal donation of special hamantaschen from New York for our school-wide Purim celebration on Sunday, March 8. Thank you to **Merrill Mazzella, Amanda Rowe and Gabrielle Zettler** for painting our students' arms as part of the Purim celebration. And thank you to **Temple Emanu-El Sisterhood** for providing funds to help pay for materials for the party. Students, family and staff all enjoyed the very entertaining comedic magic performed by Magic By Derek. Congratulations to all of our Purim costume and grogger contest winners (every student went home with a "prize" so our children were all smiles per our school tradition.)

Closing info...As you know, we closed Religious School as of Sunday, March 15. Since then, Temple Emanu-El's Board of Trustees voted to keep the building closed until the end of April. For now, our plan is to return to school on **Sunday, May 3, 2020**. We are planning to extend the school year calendar through June to make up the missed days.

Right now, we anticipate that the **final session will be on Sunday, June 21**. This means we lose one Wednesday session this year and that our school year will hopefully finish around the same time as local public schools. As conditions around the nation change daily, we will re-evaluate as we get closer to the end of the month.

Distance learning options...For now, our students will have distance learning options at home so they can maintain their Hebrew skills while we are on this extended break. Even if we don't see each other in person for a few weeks, we will stay connected as a community over the Internet. We will send you an updated school year calendar shortly. Rabbi Marc and Sherry will be contacting 7th grade families to arrange continued Bar Mitzvah study.

Everyone, please stay safe by remaining at home with your families, not touching your faces, and washing your hands often.

Warmest regards,

Armi Rowe and Jennifer Zettler, TERS Co-Administrators
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