



PO Box 288
Waterford, CT 06385
860-443-3005
www.tewaterford.org

Marc E. Ekstrand
Rabbi

Sherry Barnes
Cantorial Soloist

Aaron Rosenberg
Rabbi Emeritus

Jo-el Fernandez
President

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COVID-19 Situation Update

Friends,

We live in challenging times. Our latest challenge is how to react to the current COVID-19 outbreak. As all of us have read and heard in the news, the situation is changing rapidly. Our President, Jo-el Fernandez has already communicated to you the actions that the Temple leadership has taken. This has unfortunately caused us to suspend live services and many events at the Temple. Sherry Barnes and I are working on a plan to have an online service option available by tomorrow night. As part of my regular Friday afternoon Shabbat message there will be a link to our Shabbat Service.

Additionally, I have also been informed that no visitation is currently allowed at either L&M or Westerly Hospitals. Longterm care facilities are also restricting access. However, I am still available to you and want to stay in touch with you.

Whether you are sick or stuck at home, I am still available to you. Everyone should feel free to reach out to me on my cell phone, 513-479-1962. If I don't answer, please text or leave me a voicemail message and I will get back to you as soon as possible. We can arrange to call, FaceTime or Skype. Bottom line, you are not alone.

Please stay informed about this public health crisis. If you have questions about your own health situation, please be in contact with your healthcare provider. Yale New Haven Health has also set up a hotline to answer questions about COVID-19 from 7am to 7pm, Monday thru Friday – Call 833-ASK-YNHH(833-275-9644).

Sherry and I are looking forward to seeing you in person as soon as possible.

L'Shalom,
Rabbi Marc

(See next page for tips on staying healthy.)

Staying Healthy

Here are other recommendations:

Get a flu shot. It won't protect you from COVID-19 but the flu vaccination is effective and safe. Soon, you will see letters from Orthodox, Conservative and Reform Rabbis which I will also sign. These letters will dispel the myth that there is Jewish religious reasoning to refrain from vaccines, and they will emphasize that it is our moral and ethical responsibility to vaccinate ourselves in order to protect family members and our community.

When you are sick – avoid close contact with others; stay at home; cover your mouth and nose when sneezing and coughing; wash your hands.

Wash your hands often. The best way to clean your hands is with soap and water - wet, lather, **scrub for at least 20 seconds**, rinse and dry with a clean towel - sanitizers with at least 60% alcohol are the next best option. If you use hand sanitizer, put it in the palm of your hand and then rub over all of your hand surfaces until your hands are dry.

Avoid touching your eyes, nose and mouth.

Practice other good health habits:

Clean surfaces – clean and disinfect frequently touched surfaces and home, work, and school. Eat nutritious food and drink plenty of water, be physically active, manage your stress, and get plenty of sleep.

Stay informed from reliable sources. The best place for information on COVID-19 is the CDC. <https://www.cdc.gov> You will find updates on the outbreak and what is being done to address it. You will also find information on what you can do to protect yourself. My recommendations above are from the CDC. If you have travel plans outside the US, check the US Department of State Travel Advisories here:

<https://travel.state.gov/content/travel/en/traveladvisories/traveladvisories.html/>

It is best to keep those at high risk of flu complications away from people with cold and flu symptoms. **Do not expose potentially vulnerable populations by going out while ill.** Your primary care physician's office can address any further concerns you have about illnesses, very likely by phone or online portal.

Here are links for **reliable information** from Federal, State, and Local health agencies...

<https://www.cdc.gov>

<https://portal.ct.gov/DPH/Public-Health-Preparedness/Main-Page/2019-Novel-Coronavirus>

<https://llhd.org>

Please know that the Temple leadership, Religious School Directors, and myself are staying as up to date as possible and doing our best to make good decisions for our community.