

Update from TCS Covid-19 Task Force

As we enter the 9th month of this pandemic, we want to update you on all the ways TCS is open for you. As you know we are open remotely in many aspects, including Friday Night services, B'nai Mitzvah services, SULAM and GESHER, Torah study, morning check ins, musical sing alongs, as well as many other options you can find in our TCS weekly emails and on the TCS website.

The close-knit community of TCS is the heart of our congregation. We are striving to maintain that community by providing ways to be together but apart. The following are several categories of events typically hosted by TCS with information on how we are safely conducting these events. When deciding on these guidelines we considered the science of this virus, the case loads in the communities where our congregants reside, and the space/ventilation limitations of our building.

Meeting with a Staff Member

If you need to meet individually with a staff member, we ask that you first attempt a phone call, email, or online visit. If you and the staff member agree that an in-person visit is necessary, you must make an appointment and fill out the attestation form before entering the building. The form can be found on the website, is accessible via QR code on the temple door, and can be filled out in paper form once at TCS. This form provides us with information required by the town of Easton in case contact tracing is needed. We thank you for filling out this form each time you enter the building. Staff members may ask you to meet in the sanctuary as this room's high ceiling provides the best air flow in the building. As always, masks are required for anyone visiting TCS. We also ask you to practice safe social distancing.

B'nai Mitzvah

At this time families have a couple of options for the service. Families can choose to hold the service inside TCS while simultaneously live broadcasting via Zoom. At this time, our sanctuary can accommodate up to 25 people who are masked and appropriately distanced. All guests must fill out the attestation form as well. While on the bima service leaders may unmask for their portion. Specific sanitation procedures will be reviewed with families for handling the Torah at the time. Because people will be unmasked, the Rabbi will lead the service from his office. This way he remains unmasked, can sing safely, and will be able to speak clearly. This ensures the safety of both the family and the Rabbi.

Families can also opt to hold the service offsite either in their own home, outdoors, or at a private venue. Families that choose this option can take the Torah home with them. The Rabbi will lead this service via Zoom.

Funeral/Shiv'ah

When the unfortunate occurs, we at TCS are here for you to help you with your grieving. Outdoor graveside funerals that are masked and appropriately distanced can be conducted by the Rabbi. TCS will follow all safety guidelines put in place by the particular cemetery. Shiv'ah services will be led remotely via Zoom by clergy or a lay leader.

Baby Naming

Simchas will be celebrated! There are several options for families to choose. Families may choose to hold the short 10-15 minute ceremony outdoors, practicing safe social distancing and mask wearing. Babies should never be masked, but the state requires everyone over age 5 to be masked. This ceremony can be private with just the family or it can be live streamed via Zoom. If weather does not permit an outdoor ceremony, families can choose the indoor option and live streaming via Zoom can be conducted as well. The indoor space must be large enough to allow for social distancing and have adequate ventilation. The sanctuary is a beautiful option for an indoor baby naming. As always, those choosing to use TCS must be masked and fill out the attestation form.

Weddings

Outdoor ceremonies can take place while observing mask wearing and social distancing. While the Rabbi is there, tent sides must be open for proper air flow. For the safety of the couple and all guests, the typical singing that the Rabbi does at weddings will be skipped. Further safety measures and details will be assessed with the couple at the time of the simcha.

Friday Night Services

Here at TCS we are seeing an amazing turnout with our online Friday Night services. To keep everyone safe, these services will remain remote. This allows for all congregants, no matter their comfort level, to attend services. We must remember that TCS is a small building and although we have high ceilings in the sanctuary, to safely hold in person services with people from various families we would need to open windows and turn on the fans. With cold weather approaching, we feel that this would create an uncomfortable environment. The cooling and heating systems at TCS do not ventilate; windows are the only way for outside air to circulate inside.

SULAM/GESHER

At this time SULAM, GESHER, and OASIS will remain remote. We continue to watch the numbers in the communities where our students live. We will remain remote through November and reassess in December. When we reassess, we will consider parental input, teacher input, student input, the limitations of our building, as well as the science of this virus.

Other Events

Outdoor events have been successfully held and may continue to do so. All groups must follow the state limits for outdoor gatherings. At this time, the limit is 25 people. Even outside, attendees should be masked and maintain social distancing as much as possible. Shared food is not allowed, but events can have prepackaged food for attendees to take.

Indoor events in private residences are currently limited to 10 people and the same mask and social distancing guidelines must be followed for a TCS sponsored event. The same food rules apply. All in person events must end by 9:30 pm to comply with the new state order.

As of November 6th a new stay at home order is in place and TCS strongly encourages all events to be remote at this time.