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## Reopening our Building!

1 message

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**Rabbi Rona Shapiro** <rabbishapiro@bnaijacob.org>

Fri, Apr 9, 2021 at 11:23 AM

Reply-To: rabbishapiro@bnaijacob.org

To: cbj.receptionist@gmail.com



**We are thrilled to announce that we are finally returning to our building and, more importantly, we will be able to be with one another in person for the first time in well over a year!** We are so eager to welcome you back to our synagogue and to be together again.

Beginning April 23, we will hold services Friday nights and Saturday mornings in person in the sanctuary. Some changes will be necessary: everyone will be required to wear masks, seats will be marked off so that we can observe appropriate physical distances, and children will need to remain with their parents and will not be free to roam the building. We ask that anyone who is not feeling well, regardless of symptoms or vaccination status, please stay home.

**We want to reiterate that mask wearing is for the protection of everyone. Even if you are vaccinated, you still need to wear a mask. Although your vaccination status may change how you socialize in small groups, it does not impact larger gatherings in public places or businesses.**

Weekday evening services will remain on zoom for the time being. We are currently assessing how best to conduct weekday mornings and we will be in touch as soon as we know more. We also recognize that there are those who will still be uncomfortable coming to the synagogue and there are those who cannot come. We realize that both groups have benefited tremendously from digital access this year. We are committed to continuing that experience and upgrading it with new production equipment. This equipment is being installed even as we speak. New filters are also being installed in our HVAC system to improve the safety of our building. Finally, our tent — Ohel Ya'akov — will return later in the spring and we will resume services there as soon as it is warm enough, along with outdoor grab-and-stay kiddushes in the tent. For the time being, we will not hold kiddush luncheons indoors.

In addition, we will reopen our building to funerals following the same guidelines as above. Unfortunately, we will not be able to have a receiving line for the time being. We will be able to visit sick congregants or grieving families in their homes and hospital rooms, as long as the hospital permits. Our plan with B'nai Mitzvah celebrations has been evolving and decisions will be made according to the family's needs and our guidelines at the time

of the celebration. Any family holding a bar or bat mitzvah needs to communicate with the synagogue office so we can decide how best to accommodate your family.

Smaller meetings and classes in the library may be held, but we will plan some events, like the annual meeting, in the sanctuary. Our kitchen will be available for small groups of congregants to cook together. We fully intend to reopen religious school in the fall and resume Yahad, our joint religious school with Or Shalom. More to follow on this as plans shape up. We certainly hope to be in our building for high holidays but as we have all learned this past year, planning six months out has been challenging, and all we can do is promise to make the best decisions we can as we move forward.

We can't tell you how happy we will be to see all of you in person and to pray with you in the same room. It means so much! Of course, all plans are contingent upon the direction of the pandemic, and we hope and pray that as a nation and a state we will continue to move in the right direction. As relieved as we all feel, we can't stress enough how important it is to continue doing what you have been doing — wear masks, observe social distance, wash your hands, and follow recommended guidelines for gathering.

As always, throughout this process, our decisions have been guided by the expertise of our COVID-19 task force which includes a number of medical experts. We are deeply grateful for their help and support throughout this year. Should you have any questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to reach out to us.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Rona Shapiro  
Glenn Duhl, President

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