

Indoor Beth Shalom Services – Frequently Asked Questions

Q. What time will these services begin on Fridays and Saturdays?

Friday night services start promptly at 7:00 p.m. Saturday morning services begin at 9:30 a.m.

Q. Where will the service be located?

These services will be located in the synagogue sanctuary.

Q. How will seating be arranged?

Seats are pre-set in two sections to accommodate the different situations and comfort levels of all our congregants. Please remain respectful of others' desire for social distancing.

- The section with non-socially distanced seating is for anyone who does not mind sitting closer to others not in their social pod. Mask use remains mandatory for anyone over the age of two even when seated.
- In the socially distanced section, seating is spaced further apart and arranged more like social pods. Mask use remains mandatory for anyone over the age of two.
- Unvaccinated children must remain with their parents at all times. Children under two, who are unmasked, must remain with their families in the socially distanced section.
- Rabbi and Cantor will be singing unmasked and will be located 10 feet from the nearest seats in any section.
- When registering, please list all family members who will be seated with you.

Q. Can I sit with my friends?

Yes, as long as everyone is comfortable sitting together. Please be considerate of others' desire to social distance and ask permission before approaching others to hug or shake hands.

Q. Will we be allowed to walk around?

During services, please remain in your chosen seats so you do not disturb others. After services, you can walk around to exchange greetings. Everyone must remain fully masked at all times while in the building.

Please do not congregate in the lobby since its size limits adequate social distancing. The office and back hallways are closed to all but clergy, staff, and authorized individuals. Also, feel free to gather with appropriate social distancing outdoors, weather permitting.

Q. Can my children use the playground?

For safety, children must be supervised by a parent or other responsible adult (not including the security guard) whenever they are outdoors. All children ages 2 and older using the playground must remain masked. Please refrain from overcrowding on the playground.

Q. Will Prayer books/Siddurim be provided?

The *Sim Shalom* for Shabbat and Festivals prayerbook/siddur will be provided on your seat. Please leave your prayer book on your seat following services.

For those who do not yet read Hebrew, our transliteration booklet, *S'fatai Tiftach*, which includes almost all the Friday evening songs we will sing in English letters (transliteration), will be available in a basket in the lobby. Please return it to the basket in the lobby following services.

For the Torah and Haftorah readings on Saturday mornings, copies of the large red *Etz Hayim Torah and Commentary* can be picked up from the bookshelves leading into the sanctuary. Please return your *Etz Hayim* to these shelves at the end of services. Please observe social distancing when picking up and returning your *Etz Hayim*.

Q. Do you have yarmulkes (kipot) for use?

At Beth Shalom Congregation, a head covering (e.g., a *yarmulke*/kippah) is required in the building for all males and encouraged for all females. We encourage you to bring your own head covering of choice. There will be kippot available, if needed, which you should take home with you for future use. Please do not return used kippot.

Q. May I borrow a tallit on Shabbat?

Saturday mornings, tallitot will be available on a rack in the lobby for your use. Please return them to the rack when you finish services. Please observe social distancing when picking up and returning tallitot. We encourage you to bring your own tallit if you have one.

Q. Will there be instrumental music at Friday Night services?

On the first Friday of the month through August, we will have our Shabbat Unplugged service with Cantor Apt playing the guitar since the service ends prior to the start of Shabbat. Monthly Shabbat Unplugged services on the first Friday of every month with Cantor playing piano will resume in October, skipping September out of respect for special High Holiday set ups that must be completed before that Labor Day weekend.

Q. Do all participants need to pre-register to attend?

Yes, everyone needs to pre-register each week to confirm you and your party are symptom free. If you are unable to pre-register, you are still welcome to attend but will be asked to provide such information to our greeter and security guard before entering services.

Q. Must all participants wear a mask during the service and while in the building?

Everyone over the age of two must wear a mask when in the building. Any child under two need not be masked but must sit with parents in the socially distanced section. All unvaccinated children must remain with an adult at all times.

Q. Will participants be able to use the restroom?

Lobby restrooms are available for use, if needed, for up to three individuals at a time. If you prefer to be the only person in the restroom, you can wait until the restroom is empty and place on the door a sign indicating the rest room is in use. The sign can be found outside the second door to the restrooms. Please observe social distancing while waiting for the restroom in the lobby.

Q. Will there be security?

Yes, a security guard will be on duty before, during and after services.

Q: Are we permitted to participate in the service by reading responsively and singing?

Yes, you are welcome to participate in the service by reading responsively and singing.

Q: Will there be aliyot and other honors on Shabbat morning?

Yes. Honors will be given out during services. However, if you would like an aliyah for a special reason (yahrzeit in memory of a loved one, gomel after surviving a life-threatening experience, anniversary, birthday, etc.), you are welcome to email your request in advance to rabbi.assistant@beth-shalom.net by noon Thursday preceding the Sabbath you are requesting.

In the email, please specify the English and full Hebrew names of the person/people requesting the aliyah (including one's own and one's parents' Hebrew names and if you are a Cohen or a Levi). Please also indicate if the aliyah is for any special reason.

Please note that Jewish tradition prescribes prioritizing aliyot for yahrzeits, gomel, etc. Please check in with the greeters or floor managers when you arrive to confirm your honor.

Q: Can the El Malei memorial prayer be recited for my loved one?

Yes. Email rabbi.assistant@beth-shalom.net no later than noon Thursday preceding the Sabbath to request the El Malei memorial prayer be recited for your loved one. Please include your loved one's full English and Hebrew names (including their parents' Hebrew names, if that person was a Cohen or a Levi, and how you are related, e.g., mother, father, etc.). You may also request an aliyah in memory of loved one. (See above.)

Both those attending in person and on Zoom can request an El Malei memorial prayer.

Q. Can children lead Ashrei and other closing prayers Saturday mornings?

Yes. There is an optional link on the in-person registration form to sign up your child/ren (one child or siblings in the same household per prayer) to lead Ashrei, Ei Keloheinu, and Aleinu. You may also volunteer on that day by checking with the floor manager.

Q. Will I be able to chat with the Rabbi or Cantor?

After services, Rabbi and Cantor will descend to either side of the Torah Reading Table on the floor and invite congregant greetings. Please observe six feet physical distancing from our clergy during greetings and with each other as you wait your turn. Please do not approach Rabbi and Cantor on the bima.

Q. Will there be an "Oneg," "Kiddush" or other food served?

At this time only for b'nai mitzah. Please refrain from bringing any food into the building. Only water bottles are permitted.

Please do not remove your mask to drink in the sanctuary. Please go to the lobby or outside before removing your mask to take a drink.

During b'nai mitzvah kiddush, you may remove your mask for eating and drinking only while seated in designated kiddush seating areas.

Q. Will services continue to be shown on Zoom and be Livestreamed?

For the time being, we will have an option to participate via Zoom or Livestream at the links on our website: www.beth-shalom.net.