

Outdoor Shabbat Services FAQ

Service and capacity are subject to change based on state and local regulations.

Why are masks required if we are outdoors?

In order to be as safe as possible in a large group, we are asking everyone over the age of three years old to wear a mask, covering your mouth and nose, during the service.

How will seating be organized?

We plan to paint rectangles of approximately 9'x 6' (54 sq ft), with some additional buffer space between adjacent rectangles, in order to promote physical distancing. We estimate that each rectangle could hold up to 5 people. We will have ushers/lay leaders to help guide people to the seating areas.

Can I sit next to my friends?

Certainly! We suggest that in this case you pre-arrange meeting with your friends in the parking lot prior to services, and then arrive together so that you can be guided to your seating area. It will not be possible for us to leave "blank spaces" or "hold seats." Congregants may switch seating areas if they wish, but please do so by being respectful of one another's space.

If you chose to sit in your space with others not in your family, please note that this is your choice. Temple Isaiah will not be enforcing who will be sitting with whom in your spot.

Can I take up two spots?

We are asking that each spot hold five people in your group or family. If you have more than five people in your group you may take two spots. Ushers will be on site to assist with spot assignments.

Why are sign ups required? Will I be turned away if I haven't signed up?

We strongly encourage everyone to sign up, as having an accurate headcount will help us (1) ensure that we are within capacity limits required by the State/County and appropriate physical distancing for our space (2) facilitate arranging the seating areas prior to services (3) and allow us to create a preprinted list of those attending to limit contact when signing in upon arrival. However, as long as we remain below the county-mandated outdoor capacity level, we will allow anyone who wishes to participate to join us.

We are also going to ask you to sign-in when you arrive. This is for contact tracing purposes.

Is there a limit to the number of people who can sign up?

Current Howard County guidelines allow for no more than 250 people at an outdoor gathering. However, due to the size of our outdoor space and making allowances for physical distancing, we are limiting the number of people at this service to 120 participants.

Will masks be required? Are they required for children?

Masks will be required for ages three and above. This requirement is fully consistent with CDC and public health guidelines, and is being mandated in order to promote the health and safety of our community.

We will have masks available in case you forget or misplace yours.

Clean hands

There will be hand sanitizer stations available at various locations for your use and safety.

What about prayer books?

Instead of prayer books, we will provide a single page handout containing the prayers that can either be discarded or kept for future outdoor services.

Will we be permitted to participate in the service by singing and reading responsively?

Yes - we would like everyone to participate. Singing softly and quietly reading while wearing a mask poses little risk to those who are socially distanced.

Can I bring food?

We respectfully ask that you not bring food into the area. If you wish to bring a personal water bottle that will be permitted, especially since the weather will be so warm in August. Please plan on taking your water container home with you.

What if it rains?

We will monitor the weather situation prior to services. In the event of high probability of rain in the forecast, we will have our regular Zoom services. If it rains during the service, we will encourage people to return to their cars. If needed, we will have physically distanced space within the sanctuary available for an emergency weather shelter.

What if I (or my kids) need to use the restroom?

Restrooms will be available in the building. However, to ensure the health and safety of our community, we ask that you wait until bathrooms are unoccupied before going in (parents may of course go in with children as needed). We will have ushers to facilitate access and regulate the number of people in the building.

My kids will want to sit with their friends. Can this be arranged?

As mentioned above, we encourage families who want to be near each other to arrange arriving together so that you can be guided to the same seating area. We realize that some families may already be within each other's "social bubble" and that families will have to make decisions based on their own

comfort level. Once you are in your assigned seating area please do not have children or others going from space to space.

Will there be an Oneg after services?

Unfortunately, we will not be able to provide an Oneg at this time, owing to health and safety concerns.

Will outdoor services be streamed as well?

Yes, we will stream the outdoor service so that they can still be enjoyed by those who wish to stay at home.