

Dear Friends,

As the COVID pandemic evolves, our goal is to be responsive and responsible, balancing health and safety concerns with our desire to be in community with each other. As expected, the number of cases has dropped dramatically on the Island. We are therefore very excited to announce plans for reopening the Center for in-person services, holidays and religious school with updated protocols.

Along with our excitement about gathering, we remain committed to the fundamental Jewish value of *pikuach nefesh*, the importance of preserving life. Judaism also teaches that we are responsible to maintain the safety of the public and shared space. We may take reasonable risks in our private spaces, but in our shared spaces, we must prioritize protecting each other.

In deciding on the protocols for this next phase of reopening, we have consulted with a group of members who are medical and public health professionals. We are enormously grateful to these members for their generosity in taking time to share their expertise and for their thoughtfulness regarding the decisions we must make. With their help, the leadership of the Hebrew Center has decided on a plan for reopening beginning March 9<sup>th</sup> with the following protocols for in-person gatherings:

- We require all those who attend services, religious school and programs to be fully vaccinated, including boosters for those eligible. Proof of vaccination can either be presented at the door or shared with the office by uploading one's card or bringing it by. (Children younger than 5 years old and not yet eligible are invited to our Tot Shabbat program designed for young children).
- We will require high quality masks that are either N95, KN95, or KF94. The Hebrew Center will keep an ample supply for both children and adults at the door for those who do not have their own. Those speaking or leading from the Bima can remove their masks while they are leading.
- Seating will be spaced out for social distancing. A maximum of 50 persons can be in the sanctuary at once.

Shabbat morning services will be in-person beginning March 12<sup>th</sup>. Friday night services will continue Zoom only through March and will resume in the sanctuary in person beginning April 1st. To ensure the widest accessibility, all in-person services will also be available through Zoom, including Purim which will be held at the Hebrew Center on March 16<sup>th</sup>, 5:30. Registration for Purim is necessary to attend in person.

We are committed to creating multiple ways to be there for each other during a very trying time. We want to thank everyone for your extraordinary kindness and understanding. If you have any questions or concerns, please feel free to contact us. We look forward to seeing you in person or on Zoom in the coming months. We pray that our path will continue to be a safe and healthy one for all members of our community.

Robert W. Herman DMD  
Rabbi Caryn Broitman