



June 9, 2020
17 Sivan 5780

Dear Adath Israel Family,

We hope that this update finds you healthy, and enduring these challenging and unprecedented times. Your synagogue staff and lay leadership has been hard at work seeking ways to stay connected from afar at this time when community seems more needed than ever. Our pivot to online and telephone outreach was almost instantaneous, with online twice-daily minyan, Shabbat and holiday services, Zoom bar/bat mitzvah celebrations and shivas, seders, as well as adult, teen, school-age and early-childhood learning, and more. Our *Chesed* (Caring) Committee has provided meals, calls, distanced visits, and other acts of lovingkindness.

While summer would normally mean a time for long-term projects and a restorative slow-down, this year is unlike all others. We intend to continue to bring our community together in ways that are safe and possible, according to public-health and governmental guidelines.

Of course, during the summer we turn our attention to preparing for the High Holidays as well. At this time, while we continue to hope for positive developments, **it is impossible to know whether, and in what numbers and how, we will be able to be in-person safely at the time of the High Holidays.** We are therefore planning for the likelihood that our High-Holiday gatherings will be online experiences that will seek to be as musical, reflective, inspiring, and interactive as possible. We have not given up hope for an experience that we can come together in person, with some hybrid collection of virtual and smaller in-person prayer experiences - but we need to think expansively and creatively about what our holiday experience may be in these unprecedented times.

This update makes us all anxious – as the High Holidays are among the pinnacle times throughout the Jewish Year when, more than any other, we are affirmed in the impact of Jewish communal togetherness and identity. As we plan, **we'd like to hear from you: What aspects of the Holidays bring you the meaning and sense of community that are most important to you? Please click [HERE](#) to fill out this survey by June 17, 2020**, so that we can plan accordingly to provide the optimal experience for you, under these circumstances.

Of course, the uncertainty surrounding our ability to re-open for the High Holidays and in general has profound repercussions for our financial health as a synagogue. Adath Israel is a strong synagogue – but, as is the case with so many businesses and non-profits, we are concerned about the economic uncertainties of this time, even as we are reminded in this crisis of the spiritual and emotional importance of our synagogue community's support. Please look for an update in the coming days about dues, membership, and *tzedakah*.

B'tikvah (with hope),

Rabbi Eric Yanoff Rabbi Andrew Markowitz Lauren Marks-Cabans Lenore Asbel