



TEMPLE BETH SHALOM
JOYFUL · PERSONAL · ACCESSIBLE

Shabbat & Lifecycle Subcommittee Report

Temple Beth Shalom COVID-19 Task Force

These recommendations are based on the prevailing conditions of the COVID-19 pandemic in Central Ohio as of August 2020. These recommendations are in effect through at least November 1, 2020. The Task Force will review its recommendations in late October, at which time potential changes may be considered based on the course of the virus.

Topic 1: Shabbat Observance

Background Information:

- Temple Beth Shalom (TBS) has been conducting services online since Friday, March 13, 2020.
- Most Friday night services have around fifty families watching and participating on Facebook Live and the TBS website.
- The Temple has been conducting Drive-In Shabbat Services in May, June, and July, and these have been well received and attended. Approximately 150-250 people have attended each of these drive-in services. These services allow congregants to gather in their cars in the parking lot and safely enjoy a service together.
- As the number of COVID-19 cases in Ohio has remained high, worship in the building itself is considered high-risk, and certain activities inherent in our communal worship experience (singing, spoken, communal prayer, onegs) are also considered high-risk.

Outcomes:

- Through November 1, 2020, Friday Night Erev Shabbat Services will continue to be held virtually on Facebook Live, the TBS website, Zoom, or some other streaming / recording platform.
- When possible and safe, TBS staff will lead services from the bima. Staff will explore combining pre-recorded music with a live service. When the pandemic dictates otherwise, the rabbis will lead services from their homes.
- Weekly, virtual Havdalah services will continue for the foreseeable future.
- As long as the weather permits, drive-in services will continue at least monthly. Staff is looking into propane heaters to lengthen our drive-in accessible days.

Topic 2: Lifecycle Observances

Background Information:

- The Subcommittee evaluated private, family lifecycle events.
- These are different from regular Shabbat worship services, as the attendance can be tightly controlled, and full lists of participants can be obtained before the event itself begins.
- Until now, B'nai Mitzvah services have been community events, and the whole Temple community has always been encouraged to participate in these services. For the purposes of safety and health, B'nai Mitzvah services will temporarily be thought of as private family lifecycle events.
- The Subcommittee's first and foremost concern is the safety and health of our congregation, clergy, and staff. While TBS has endeavored to create the safest experiences possible based on the best medical advice available, unfortunately, no live in-person experience is completely free of risk of infection or transmission of COVID-19.

Outcomes:

B'nai Mitzvah

- B'nai Mitzvah tutoring will continue virtually over zoom or a similar platform (for example, Facetime or Google Meet).
- B'nai Mitzvah Families will be given four choices:
 - 1) **Most Preferred:** All-online service via a platform such as Zoom.
 - A. In this type of service, participants, rabbis, and musicians would be in their own homes and it would be “led” remotely.
 - B. Participants will have the option of having a Torah scroll delivered to their home to be used during the service. The rabbis will provide ample training for participants to properly handle and care for the Torah scroll.
 - C. A virtual Siddur (prayer book) will be accessible via Zoom or in a link prior to the service.
 - 2) **Weather Permitting Option:** Small, in-person service to be held outdoors, on the patio of the Temple
 - A. Maximum of 20 family members and five Temple staff members (rabbis, musicians) can safely participate in these services in person.
 - B. Every attendee, including the B'nai Mitzvah and Temple staff member, must wear a mask at all times.
 - C. B'nai Mitzvah family will provide Temple staff with a list of seating clusters ahead of time so that socially-distanced seating can be pre-arranged. The family and participants will be reminded to maintain social distancing and asked not to congregate.
 - D. B'nai Mitzvah family and participants will sign a document stating they are symptom-free at the time of the service.
 - E. Musicians (Gail, Nick, Marc, etc) may produce live music, wearing a mask and set up at a further distance from the congregation.
 - F. The congregation is requested not to sing along, but rather to hum to show participation.
 - G. The B'nai Mitzvah may still chant and sing their prayers and Torah portion, as long as they are masked and at a safe distance.
 - H. The Temple will arrange to have the patio cleaned and beautified as well as have some sort of shade mechanism installed.
 - I. These services will be streamed via TBS livestream, Facebook Live, Zoom, or whatever medium the family chooses that TBS has access to.
 - J. When scheduling the B'nai Mitzvah the family will work with the Temple staff to select a back-up plan in the event of inclement weather. This can be either *option 1*. All On-Line service or *option 3*. Small in-person service in the Sanctuary (with no live music)
 - 3) **Limited Indoor Service:** Small, in-person service to be held in the Sanctuary
 - A. The Subcommittee and Task Force believe that a maximum of 20 family members and five Temple staff members (rabbis, musicians) can safely participate in these services in person.
 - B. Every attendee, including the B'nai Mitzvah and Temple staff member, must wear a mask at all times.
 - C. B'nai Mitzvah family will provide Temple staff with a list of seating clusters ahead of time so that socially-distanced seating can be pre-arranged. **The family and participants will be reminded to maintain social distancing and asked not to congregate.**

- D. B'nai Mitzvah family and participants will sign a document stating they are symptom-free at the time of the service.
- E. Music for the service will be pre-recorded by Gail, Nick, Marc, etc, and will be played on a screen during the service. There will be no live music sung during the service.
- F. The congregation is asked not to sing along, but rather to hum to show participation.
- G. The B'nai Mitzvah may still chant and sing their prayers and Torah portion, as long as they are masked and at a safe distance from the congregation and Temple staff.
- H. These services will be streamed via TBS livestream, Facebook Live, Zoom, or whatever medium the family chooses that TBS has access to.

4) Reschedule for a later date

- A. Given the restrictions necessary, some families may choose to postpone their B'nai Mitzvah until a later date, perhaps late Spring 2021 or beyond.
 - B. **Families will be allowed one date-switch.** Those families who already rescheduled from Spring/Summer to a date in August-November, will have the opportunity to do one more date-switch if they so desire.
 - C. The rabbis and staff will do their best to make sure new dates are assigned in an equitable way.
 - D. In order to allow for enough service dates, both 10:00am and 4:00pm services on Saturday will be allowed, and Sunday morning services.
 - E. Due the high volume of services and other lifecycle events, there is a possibility that only one rabbi will officiate.
- The rabbis will discuss an alternative service format with each family.
 - Depending on the attendees' responses to the [B'nai Mitzvah Health Acknowledgement](#) form, it could necessitate a change in service format or require the service to be rescheduled. These situations will be handled on a case-by-case basis.
 - No food is permitted in the Temple building at this time, and the Social Hall and Kitchen are closed until further notice. No Oneg Shabbat or Kiddush luncheons.

Weddings & Baby Naming Ceremonies

- Zoom or video conferencing options are available.
- The Subcommittee and Task Force believe that a maximum of 20 family members and five Temple staff members (rabbis, musicians) can safely participate in these services.
- Every participant must wear a mask at all times.
- The rabbis will work with each family to ensure there is social distancing at ceremonies.
- Participants will be advised that the rabbis will not stay after the ceremony.
- When possible, families are encouraged to hold ceremonies outdoors.
- Ceremonies will be kept to 20 minutes, lowering the exposure risk for the rabbis and participants with the acknowledgment that a bris for a boy might be slightly longer than 20 minutes.
- No food is permitted in the Temple building at this time, and the Social Hall and Kitchen are closed until further notice.

Funerals

- The Subcommittee and Task Force believe that a maximum of 20 family members and clergy can safely participate in these services in person.
- Every participant must wear a mask at all times.
- Grave-side services with a Zoom or streaming component are the preference of the task force.
- The rabbis will work with each family to ensure there is social distancing at ceremonies.