



## Important Coronavirus Information

Like synagogues across the country, the ENJC is sensitive to its need to remain a source of community and comfort to its members, while remaining cautious and thoughtful about how to deal with the growing wave of coronavirus cases. We are monitoring the rapidly changing situation and discussing our options as we learn more information. The health of our members, our staff, and the community are of utmost concern to us and remain our highest priority.

We want to assure you that we are making these decisions in conjunction with our clergy, considering your safety and our core value of *chesed*—caring for each other as a community with lovingkindness toward one another.

With that in mind, we have made changes in our programming and in the use of our building, and our Board of Directors and clergy will continue to reevaluate and make changes as necessary. Out of an abundance of caution, for those who will be attending services and for the benefit of clergy and staff, our custodians are doing a more thorough and detailed cleaning of all high touch areas, and all prayer books are being cleaned and sanitized.

- We are not holding regular Friday night or Saturday morning Shabbat services. A virtual Friday Kabbalat Shabbat service is available via Zoom with a link sent to your email address. Rabbi Silverman and Hazzan Walvick are creating supplemental Shabbat YouTube videos each week to view prior to Shabbat.
- Minyan services are discontinued. Congregants are encouraged to participate in our virtual minyan services, with Zoom links sent to your email address.
- The building is closed for all activities at this time. All synagogue gatherings, such as meetings and social events, are cancelled or postponed, to be rescheduled for a future date.
- Religious School classes are being provided virtually.

If you have specific concerns, please contact ENJC President Frank Brecher, [frbenjc@gmail.com](mailto:frbenjc@gmail.com); Rabbi Silverman, [rabbiiian@aol.com](mailto:rabbiiian@aol.com); or Hazzan Walvick, [hazzanwalvick@enjc.org](mailto:hazzanwalvick@enjc.org). Rabbi Silverman and Hazzan Walvick encourage you to contact them for any pastoral care or to help you manage any anxieties you or family members might have.

We appreciate your support and understanding at this difficult time. Please know that our thoughts and concerns are with each and every congregant. Together, let us lift our spirits and look forward to a future of good health and blessings.

—Frank R. Brecher, President, and The ENJC Board of Directors

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Dear Congregants,

We are living in stressful times that none of us anticipated. We might gain a bit of comfort, should we look at it through the lens of our wise tradition. We learn in the book of Leviticus “observe my ordinances and laws that men shall do them and live.

I am the Lord“ (Leviticus 18). The Talmud Yoma teaches that the words “vechai bahem” “and LIVE by them” is key, and that, therefore, the obligation to preserve human life overrides the obligation to observe almost every other commandment.

This is the reason that to survive or save another, a person may violate Shabbat; why you may eat any non kosher food that allows you to avoid starvation; why you can stop fasting on Yom Kippur. Because by surviving and by thriving you will rise again to uphold the Commandments for years to come.

This is the case, all the more so, in which we find ourselves as a society. We must sadly violate the cardinal Commandments of “do not separate yourselves from the community,” a commandment that probably has done more for the continuation of the Jewish people than any other commandment in the Torah.

Reluctantly, we must do so on the advice of medical experts who tell us that so many in our community are at risk individuals for this virulent virus. Paradoxically, instead of our natural instinct to come together to care for each other, we must fulfill the commandment of “every Jew is responsible for one another“ (at least for the next weeks ahead) by separating ourselves to care for each other. Our board has taken the prudent position to close down, with the exception of Shabbat morning services, where all medically advised precautions are in place in terms of social distancing. This is a proper decision with which we concur.

Having said this, know that we are only a phone call away should you need to speak with us. Should you need any counsel, a sounding board for anxiety in this challenging time, or even a friend to do an errand, don’t hesitate to call us. Rabbi can be contacted at 631-741-5344. Hazzan can be reached at 732-678-3336.

Rabbi Ian Silverman  
Hazzan Steven Walvick

### **Important Links to Resources from USCJ**

With cases of coronavirus (COVID-19) appearing across the globe, many synagogues and their communities are feeling uneasy or even fearful. However, because this outbreak is changing, we strongly urge clergy, lay leadership, and community members to keep themselves well-informed. We have provided a list of resources **HERE**.