

Hevre,

We are continuing to monitor the evolving situation with the coronavirus pandemic, which has now begun to spread into Montgomery County and the Philadelphia area. Our goal is to take reasonable recommended precautions, following the CDC guidelines, to slow the spread of the virus, while at the same time allowing us to continue to serve the spiritual, educational and communal needs of the Or Hadash community – neither over-reacting nor under-reacting. The situation is changing on a day-to-day basis, so we promise to communicate with you frequently to let you know what's happening. We also will post any changes to our calendar on the [Or Hadash website](#).

**In general, we are following these rules in our decision making:**

- We are cancelling special events and other gatherings that are expected to be attended by > 70 people.
- We are being careful to not put our older congregants at risk, since COVID-19 most seriously impacts older people and those with underlying medical conditions. We are encouraging older congregants and anyone else who doesn't feel safe to not attend.
- We will move services, meetings and other gatherings into larger spaces in the synagogue building, so that people attending them can maintain a safe social distance.
- We will base any decision to close the building on guidance from the CDC, Montgomery County and Upper Dublin township. We also will close the building if there is a confirmed diagnosis of COVID-19 within the Or Hadash community. Building closure means no meetings or events will be held, however we will continue to have office hours.

**Here are the latest schedule changes:**

1. As we announced in HaKeshet on Wednesday, the Scholar in Residence weekend that had been scheduled for March 20-22 has been **cancelled**. We look forward to welcoming Rahel Musleach as our Scholar in Residence next year instead. We will have regular Friday night and Saturday morning services that weekend.
2. The SATO Committee and Refugee Task Force have decided to **cancel** the Refugee Shabbat that had been scheduled for this coming Friday, March 13. There will be a regular Friday night service, beginning at 7:30pm.
3. Shabbat B'Yachad scheduled for this coming Saturday morning, March 14, has been **cancelled**. *Saturday morning Torah study and Services will be held at the usual time, with an option to join Torah Study virtually by conference call.*
4. Night Out at the Movies: The Rabbi from the Hezbollah scheduled for this Saturday night at Gratz College, followed by dinner at Szechuan Garden, will **go on as scheduled**.
5. Friday Night Shabbat Havurah scheduled for March 27 will **go on as scheduled**.
6. No decision has been made yet about events scheduled for April or May.

Should the situation worsen in our region, it is possible that we may need to physically shut down. In that event, we will find ways to leverage technology to help us stay connected to each other virtually by livestreaming, telephone, Zoom and email.

We would encourage committees and others who plan to meet in the building over the next few weeks to consider meeting virtually rather than in person, using Zoom, Skype or some other web platform.

COVID-19 comes at a particularly inopportune time for the Jewish community, with Passover only four weeks away. Many families – Phil's included– are having to cancel out-of-town travel related to the Passover holiday. If your plans for Passover have been disrupted by the coronavirus, and you either are looking for a family to host you for a seder, or have the space to host others, please contact Cheryl Berson ( [F13210@aol.com](mailto:F13210@aol.com) ) or Nadine in the synagogue office. We anticipate a robust effort at Seder matching this year.

And of course, please remember to follow the common sense precautions that we communicated earlier in the week:

- Practice not touching our faces or eyes with our hands.
- Stay home when we feel sick so that we don't infect others.
- Engage in social-distancing (leaving a seat or two between you and the next person, about a distance of 3-6 ft)
- Refrain from kissing, hugging, and shaking hands at synagogue events.
- Using serving utensils rather than hands to take food.
- Wash your hands often with soap and water for at least 20 seconds, and hand sanitizer when soap and water are not nearby.

Morah Barbara will send an email tomorrow (Friday) about any changes to the schedule for SMILE school.

At this incredibly challenging and scary time in which so much is changing rapidly and we are being encouraged to distance ourselves from others, please know that you are never more than a few moments away from being able to connect with community. However you are being personally impacted by COVID-19, if you are in need of support, please let Rabbi Alanna know. She can be reached rapidly by text or call on her cell phone: 202-421-3817, or by email at [rabbi@orhadash.com](mailto:rabbi@orhadash.com) .

We are also developing additional opportunities to learn, gather, and connect with one another over virtual platforms in the coming weeks. If you have ideas that we might integrate in these offerings, please contact [Rabbi Alanna](#), or the [appropriate committee chair](#) for that content area .

If you have any questions or concerns about our response to COVID-19, please feel free to email Phil at [president@orhadash.com](mailto:president@orhadash.com) .

L'Shalom,

Phil Rosenberg, President

Rabbi Alanna Sklover