

Principal Rabbi:
Rabbi Shulamit Ambalu MA

Associate Rabbi:
Rabbi James Baaden MA

Emeritus Rabbi:
Rabbi Colin Eimer MA

Moving the Community out of Lockdown

I hope you and your family are keeping safe and well.

Today I want to talk to you about moving our community out of lockdown, and the planning going on around how and in what circumstances we can gradually start returning to communal life.

Firstly, I would like to say thank you to everyone involved in organising, running, and hosting our weekly online services and events.

In particular I would like to thank our Rabbis for their thought-provoking messages, services and learning sessions; our Professional Team for their hard-work, creativity and time; those who present and those that host on Zoom and our wonderful team of 'buddy' volunteers who are in touch with older and isolated members of our community on a regular basis.

By now you will have heard various government statements about the gradual easing of lockdown restrictions.

I am pleased to announce that our kindergarten, Alonim, that has been open for Key worker children during lockdown, reopened its doors fully last week. Thank you to all the team for their hard work in preparing the building and the careful thought that went in to explaining the new arrangements to parents and pupils.

However, as far as the rest of synagogue activities are concerned, we are working on the understanding that there will be no significant change before the fourth of July at the earliest, and the probability that restrictions will remain in place for most, if not all, of the rest of this year.

Our priority, given the overall imperative of saving life, is to ensure as far as we can, that everyone stays safe. This presents obvious difficulties while social distancing restrictions are still in place.

We are looking at a variety of creative ways of developing shared activities on a reduced scale.

We are considering in detail what can appropriately be offered where some access to the synagogue is possible but full and normal gatherings will not be permitted.

We are taking guidance from Reform Judaism and liaising with other communities, sharing ideas and good practice.

120 Oakleigh Road North | London | N20 9EZ
Telephone: 020 8445 3400
Email: info@shaarei-tsedek.org.uk
Website: www.shaarei-tsedek.org.uk



Once the government has published its proposals for the reopening of places of worship, we will be able to move to develop specific provision for our community.

We are looking at the needs of the different elements of the community so that our offering can be as inclusive as circumstances permit.

In the meantime, we stay committed to delivering as full, engaging, meaningful and spiritual online content as we can.

For the near future we expect our Shabbat services to continue online. Indeed, we imagine that this would continue even when we return to physical services in the building.

We are also thinking carefully and creatively about the Days of Awe. Realistically, it seems most unlikely that we will all be able to come together physically in the synagogue during this time.

Our planning is focussed on finding ways to celebrate and meet members' needs for community and spiritual inspiration. This may include a combination of online interactive Services and small gatherings before and during this period.

We will be working on an extended range of teaching and alternative services throughout Elul to complement anything that we may be able to do by then in our building.

We are considering many scenarios, but this will not be a quick process. We will keep you updated, not least as and when there is further clarity on government intentions.

In the meantime, if you have any comments or suggestions, I would be delighted to hear them, please contact me via the office.

We would also be interested to hear from you or anyone you know who works in online audio-visual or has expertise that they would be willing to share.

Continue to stay safe and well.

Richard P Woolf
Synagogue Chair

10 June 2020
י"ח סיון תש"ף