



Germantown Jewish Centre

400 West Ellet Street
Philadelphia, PA 19119-3097
Tel. **(215) 844-1507**
Fax **(215) 844-8309**
www.GermantownJewishCentre.org

3/24/2020

Dear GJC friends,

If you are like me at the moment, you are hunkered down at home feeling much uncertainty. Zoom, N95, and “social distancing” were unfamiliar terms weeks ago, yet now roll easily off the tongue. Dr. Fauci has become a household name. We are filled with admiration for the medical professionals and first responders on the front line. And, we are desperately wondering when things will return to normal.

In these challenging times, Germantown Jewish Centre remains a robust source to connect to one another and nurture one another. Programming, davening, and learning still abound! We have gone virtual! While the physical building is completely closed, more and more members are participating in services and programs through Zoom, live streaming, and audio streaming. GJC professional staff is available to assist anyone with obtaining and using this technology.

Early Childhood Program (ECP) and Financial Consequences

ECP has shuttered, pursuant to Governor Wolf’s emergency shut down order. The GJC community deeply values our ECP teachers, whose dedication makes ECP the magical, cozy place to which we entrust our children. For this reason, the Executive Committee, per the recommendation of the Finance Committee, unanimously agreed to continue paying these teachers at full salary through the end of the fiscal year. Also, recognizing that many ECP families may be feeling a financial pinch, the Executive Committee voted to refund ECP tuition for the time ECP is closed to those families who make a request. Of course, any amount that families wish to donate (tax deductible) would be deeply appreciated and directed to paying the teachers.

ECP is a major revenue source for the synagogue, and its closure will have a significant financial impact. In the worst case scenario, in which ECP has to remain closed for the rest of the school year, current estimates project a possible loss of up to \$200,000. The Executive Committee has authorized funds from our operating reserves to cover this loss if needed. It may take several years to re-build this bounty, and other building maintenance projects may need to be deferred. Yet, due to the responsible stewardship of our past leaders, we can weather this storm in a manner true to our values.

And, I’m happy to report that, under the leadership of Michelle Bernstein, the ECP staff continues to provide lots of programming to its families: bedtime stories, circle time, singing songs, cooking projects and more. And, fear not, the classroom turtle and guinea pig have found loving homes, and Rabbi Zeff has kindly agreed to feed the remaining fish.

Denise Wolf
President

Adam Zeff
Rabbi

Rebecca Richman
Assistant Rabbi &
Beit Midrash Director

Nina Peskin
Executive Director

Gloria Geissler
Finance Director

Ben Rotenberg
Education Director

Michelle Bernstein
Early Childhood Director

Kate Lawn
Program & Membership

Director

Eric Word
Facilities Director

Leonard D. Gordon
Rabbi Emeritus



Germantown Jewish Centre

400 West Ellet Street
Philadelphia, PA 19119-3097
Tel. **(215) 844-1507**
Fax **(215) 844-8309**
www.GermantownJewishCentre.org

Programming and Services

There's lots going on at GJC, as always. Again, all online. Coffee chats with Rabbi Zeff on Sunday mornings and Art Beit Midrash with Rabbi Rebecca Richman, to name a few. Our Friday evening Kol Zimrah singing service and morning minyan services have more attendees than ever. Dorshei continues to gather for Shabbat, and davenners participated from all corners of the globe! Services are being live-streamed from the Charry Sanctuary for everyone. Email reminders of programs are sent the eve of every day for your convenience.

Executive Committee/Board of Directors

The Executive Committee and Board of Directors will be meeting via Zoom as scheduled. The agendas and minutes will be distributed to the congregation in the regular course for your review.

Religious School/Teen Tuesday

Kudos to Ben Rotenberg and the RS and TT teachers for producing content and engaging our kids on-line for Jewish educational instruction during the regular meeting times (Wednesday afternoons, Sunday mornings and Tuesday evenings).

Dues and Staff

Yes, we still absolutely need your dues payments. Please take some time now to make your payments. The synagogue is operational and is ready, and will be ready, to thrive despite the uncertainty in the months ahead. Our professional staff continues to work hard to provide programming, information and communications to all of us. They are also undertaking necessary projects pertaining to grant writing, security needs, and High Holidays. And, don't forget the online auction for THE BASH!

THE BASH Online Auction!

The auction goes live this Saturday night. I just registered and perused the amazing offerings. I'll be watching a few closely and hoping to outbid you all! We greatly need your financial support for this auction, so I urge you to participate.

During this challenging time, GJC is here for you. Please don't hesitate to call, text, email, or Zoom us!

Warmly,

Denise S. Wolf
President, Germantown Jewish Centre

Denise Wolf
President

Adam Zeff
Rabbi

Rebecca Richman
Assistant Rabbi &
Beit Midrash Director

Nina Peskin
Executive Director

Gloria Geissler
Finance Director

Ben Rotenberg
Education Director

Michelle Bernstein
Early Childhood Director

Kate Lawn
Program & Membership

Director

Eric Word
Facilities Director

Leonard D. Gordon
Rabbi Emeritus