



August 13, 2020

**Join us for an ONLINE Parents' Meeting Wednesday, September 2, 8:30 pm (link to be sent later)**

Dear Friends,

This note is from your Temple Religious School Committee to update you on our plans for Religious School in the fall 2020. Though we have decided that it is unsafe to open physically for the new school year, we are 100% committed to providing our children and families with high quality Jewish education—and we pray to be able to come back together in-person before too long. Here, then, in a nutshell, is our program from opening in mid-September through the end of 2020:

- 1) On most weeks beginning September 13, a Sunday morning (time TBD) one-half hour Zoom program with our entire school population, parents included. This time is intended to maintain our connection to Temple and to each other, and to introduce educational themes and learning exercises for each week. And all kids can come in their pajamas!
- 2) A weekly 10-15 minute Zoom meeting for each student and/or family, scheduled by a faculty member to follow up on the themes identified on Sundays and learning exercises that may have been suggested. This time is to ensure a continuation of substantive Jewish learning, and to encourage the development of a mentoring relationship between faculty members and families. Arrangements will be made to make this easier for families with more than one child in our Religious School.
- 3) For students in grades 6-7 who have scheduled their B-Mitzvah, an individually scheduled, 15-minute Zoom meeting with Rabbi Joseph.
- 4) For students in grades 5-6 who have not yet scheduled B-Mitzvah, an individually scheduled 15-minute Zoom meeting with one of our faculty members for a Hebrew tutorial. This time is intended to maintain progress and momentum towards B-Mitzvah preparation.
- 5) For all our students, participation in Shabbat services on Friday and Saturday is more important than ever, and should be considered an indispensable part of their Jewish education.
- 6) Tuition will to be charged at the full rate, as there will be much more individual instruction time per student, as well as increased obligations upon our faculty members both for brand-new planning and mid-week instruction. In addition, we are continuing to rely on our curriculum from the Institute for Southern Jewish Life, which implies a continuing financial obligation. **As always, we will work with individual families who need special tuition and/or dues arrangements.**

We acknowledge that there will be many brand-new stressors for our families as secular school reopens, in whatever form it takes, and therefore we have tried to keep these Jewish educational commitments as little burdensome as possible, while still allowing for real learning and real connection with each other, with Temple Shir Shalom, and with Judaism. As always—and perhaps even more than usual—we are relying on the involvement and commitment of our parents to make these efforts successful. Please note that this most unusual school year will be a work-in-progress from beginning to end...we welcome your insights and suggestions!

Thank you,

Your Religious School Committee

Sara Ben Shoshan  
Roz Okun  
Amy Carson  
Julia Egan  
Carolyne Freeman  
Toby Hunter  
Temple President Marcia Storch  
Office Manager Anne Eisenstadt  
Educator Ross Van Boven  
Rabbi Michael Joseph