

April 30, 2020

Dear Shearith Israel Family,

I have joined in the roughly weekly updates that we have been circulating to our members. I wanted to share four brief thoughts on behalf of our officers and the entire Board of Trustees here:

First, if the end of our exile and isolation is not yet in sight, then perhaps we are beginning to anticipate the time when the miasma starts to clear so that we can, in good time, focus on when and how we will be back in our holy space and, even more important, able to see our fellow congregants on something more actual than Zoom. As we think about re-entry, we can't help but think about how we have managed as long as we have and will have to manage a bit longer. The answer is, simply, that we owe manifold if not even greater *hakarat hatov* or deep felt gratitude to Rabbi Soloveichik, Rabbi Rohde, Zachary Edinger, and Barbara Reiss together with her staff for their positive leadership throughout. Without a doubt they have been what has kept us emotionally afloat. Without exaggeration, we owe them as much gratitude for our spiritual upkeep as we owe our medical and health care professionals for safeguarding our physical health.

Second, in deciding the when and how of reentry, we will be guided by same three constraints that guided us when, sadly, we closed our beloved synagogue seven weeks ago: (i) dictates and directives of the government; (ii) the advice of our particular medical advisers; and (iii) particulars about our Congregation that we will take into account, bearing in mind what our sister congregations are doing in the area. We hope to be in a position to start sharing thoughts on this in the coming weeks.

Third, in this period, we have all experienced communal loss. Many of us have experienced personal loss, too. Nothing can compensate for that loss. Amelioration will come as we, as a congregation, start to come together again.

Finally, in what we hope will grow into a "good news" column in our weekly communications, we wanted to bring to our Congregants' attention the beautiful e-blurb that the Boston Museum of Fine Arts just published on one set of our Myer Myers Torah finials, or *rimonim*. The Congregation supported our long efforts to protect and preserve these *rimonim*. The Congregation deserves the joy of seeing them, safely on temporary loan, at the MFA. <https://collections.mfa.org/objects/548181/pair-of-torah-finials?ctx=69dfca5d-b511-4be9-bbba-88497852345a&idx=6>

Thank you all. Bless us

all. Shabbat shalom. Louis Solomon, Parnas