



March 3, 2022

TO: Worshippers at the Touro Synagogue

FROM: Congregation Shearith Israel

Dear friends:

We greet you today in what seems to have morphed into a weekly update (akin to the weekly leadership update that we have been sending to our community since the start of the Pandemic, available on this [webpage](#)). We strongly believe that regular, open communication will help bring our communities together in ways that can only be positive for us all and ultimately good for the Touro Synagogue itself.

In that vein, we believe that another avenue is available to help bring our communities closer together – joint programming and events. To that end, we are planning a springtime “*Shabbaton*”, this one to be held here in NYC. Rabbi Soloveichik’s Keynote Address focusing on the history and meaning of the Touro Synagogue will be delivered after Shabbat morning services (and will be one installment in an important, mostly virtual, Spring Lecture Series on significant historic synagogues around the world). Another highlight will be an informative Sunday morning tour led by Rev. Zachary Edinger of Chatham Square Cemetery, in lower Manhattan, where 19 veterans of the America Revolution are buried. There will be other talks and programs throughout the weekend, and of course, shared Shabbat meals for us to enjoy in a relaxed and friendly atmosphere, with you as our guests. Some of you may choose to stay in a local NYC hotel, but we will offer home hospitality to any of you who prefer. We are also looking into arranging at our expense transportation to and from Newport or NYC parking, if that’s desired. Currently, we are considering the following dates: May 13-15 or May 20-22, 2022. We would love to hear from you about your availability and any other thoughts or ideas you have about what might make this *Shabbaton* a success.

Furthermore, we would like to sustain interaction and integration over time through a new Shearith Israel offering designed for you. We invite current members of Jeshuat Israel and all worshipers at the Touro Synagogue an additional connection by becoming a “*Touro Synagogue Affiliate*” of Shearith Israel. In addition to receiving communications from Shearith Israel specifically of interest to Touro Synagogue (such as these letters), *Affiliates* will receive our preferred member rates for all Shearith Israel events and programs, and will be specifically invited to attend, help plan, and coordinate programs and events of interest to the Touro Synagogue community. To become a “*Touro Synagogue Affiliate*”, please sign up [here](#).

Please note: Earlier this week some of us received a letter from “*The Negotiating Team at Jeshuat Israel*”. We are unsure what that is, and we can’t really respond given that any negotiations that are going on between the lawyers are “*off the record*”, and CJI’s lawyers have told some of us that they object to our communicating with the “*Negotiators*”. More importantly, we aren’t going to continue to correct the falsehoods or continue the unproductive back and forth. We hope that you will grasp our extended hand and help us concentrate on those things that bring us together rather than those things that drive us apart.

We looking forward to hearing back from you about the *Shabbaton*. And, to become a “*Touro Synagogue Affiliate*”, please sign up [here](#). Feel free to contact Reverend [Zachary Edinger](#) or our Executive Director [Barbara Reiss](#) with any questions. Thank you for helping bring our communities closer together.

Shabbat shalom.