



March 8, 2022
5 Adar II 5782

Dear Friends,

At long last, it is time for many of us to transition back to a new normal. We are each created “*b'tzelem elohim*,” in God’s image - that is, we have each been given the ability to show compassion and loving-kindness to one another to be slow to judge, and quick to understand and accept. As we move forward into a new stage of the pandemic, let us show kindness and inclusivity for those with a wide range of needs in our community.

Covid rates in our community are declining, and given that we have a high rate of vaccination (and a vaccination requirement for those above 5 years old within our building), in our understanding of the science we can create a space that allows a return to some normal activities while maintaining safety. With the Lexington Board of Health rescinding the town mask mandate this evening, we are making some changes to our mask policy.

From the Lexington Board of Health:

The Board of Health supports the continuation of mask-wearing according to individual preferences. And recognizes that an individual business, place of worship, or venue has the right to require patrons to wear a mask in their facility if they so choose.

The Board of Health urges all residents to show kindness and inclusivity for those with a wide range of needs in our community.

Our policy attempts to acknowledge that different people in our community have different needs. For the time being, we will have spaces and times where masks are required, and spaces and times when they are optional. Our policy is designed to allow some access to those who are not safely able to enter unmasked spaces.

Effective Thursday, March 10, 2022, the following transition out of Covid restrictions at Temple Emunah will be implemented:

- Gatherings/meetings in the social hall or sanctuary with less than 30 people, including weekday minyan: Masks optional
- Religious school children: Masks optional
- Shabbat services, and any gatherings of 30 people or more that do not inherently involve food: Masks required. People will wear masks in the sanctuary as a courtesy to those who live with immunocompromised family members or unvaccinated children. Service leaders may remove their masks. People may remove their masks for kiddush that will take place in a different room and/or outside. The sanctuary will remain a safe indoor space for people to socialize with masks on (and no food).

Weather permitting, people may eat and socialize outdoors.

All people attending in-person activities or religious school must be COVID vaccinated as follows:

- According to the CDC, up to date means a person has received all recommended COVID-19 vaccines, including any booster dose(s) when eligible.
- Anyone over 12 years of age is required to be up to date on vaccinations.
- Anyone between 5 and 11 years of age must have two vaccine doses and receive a booster as soon as eligible.

For some members of our community, the option to unmask will be a cause for celebration; for others, it will be a source of anxiety. Temple Emunah will be a safe zone without judgment, accepting people as they are, without questioning their personal choice of wearing or not wearing a mask during kiddush, daily minyan, and gatherings of less than 30 people.

Me'ir Sherer will communicate with the religious school children and their families about any additional updates to the masking policy in their programs, ensure that all children feel comfortable with their personal choice regarding wearing a mask, and teach the need to treat other children's choices with the utmost respect.

Janey Aronson and the Preschool Board will send an email with school-specific updates to all BDPS families.

The Covid committee wants everybody to feel safe as we transition out of the Covid pandemic, and welcomes your feedback. We are truly grateful to have reached this turning point and we look forward to seeing you in person soon!

Wishing you continued good health,

The Covid Committee

