To Our Dear CBE Community,

As you all know, the news about the coronavirus is changing hourly, and public health recommendations call for social separation. We are approaching this situation with great thought and care, as we are aware that the choices we make will have significant impacts on our entire community and staff, and we do not take them lightly. That said, in Judaism human life and health come above all other considerations. We are famously taught in Mishnah Sanhedrin that to save a single life is to save an entire world.

We therefore have decided that for the next two weeks, from March 14 - March 28, there will be no CBE programs, meetings, or gatherings in our buildings except for Shabbat services. Tomorrow we will be open as usual to offer a day of transition and to give families the weekend to make alternate arrangements. At this time we are not aware of any cases of COVID-19 in our community. We take this measure not as a quarantine but as a proactive step to prevent the spread of illness to the most vulnerable in our population and to help reduce the burden on our healthcare system. This two week period will also give us all time to understand more about the nature of the epidemic and how best to proceed. Wherever possible, we will be offering virtual classes and online resources, including for Yachad, the Early Childhood Center, and After School. If you are a part of these programs, you will be hearing from the director of your program shortly with details about what comes next and with a message for the children.

Most of all, we want you to know that for these two weeks CBE clergy and staff are here to care for you and to provide creative, long-distance learning, music, spirituality, pastoral support, and community however and wherever possible. We held our first Zoom Parashat Hashavua (weekly Torah portion) class last night and it was a big success. Look for other such opportunities coming your way soon.

Both Friday night and Saturday morning services will take place in our sanctuary, where we have ample space for six feet of separation among us so that we can gather safely, and where we can livestream so that every person can tune in. Shabbat services, Fridays at 6:30 PM and Saturdays at 9:30 AM, are going to be an important way for our whole community to feel connected. You can follow along with this electronic version of Mishkan Tefilah, our siddur.

One of the lessons of this virus is that we are all interdependent, and that means that not one of us is alone. We can use the power of our community to care for each other. **If you are feeling afraid, anxious, isolated, or sick—or if you need practical support**—please let our clergy know through any of our emails or at clergy@cbebk.org. If you would like to volunteer to make deliveries, phone calls, or virtual visits to other members of the community, please sign up here.

This week in the Torah, the Israelites are full of anxiety. Moses has gone up Mount Sinai and hasn't returned. The people are looking out at a forbidding wilderness, and they do not know what's going to happen next. Out of fear they build a golden calf, not their best move. If they could have taken some deep breaths, had some faith, and given each other hope, they might have been able to see that though the moment was frightening, they were going to find their way through.

Team CBE, we are going to find our way through this wilderness. We are here for each other and we are here for you. As Nahman of Bratslav taught, "The entire world is a very narrow bridge and the important thing is not to be afraid."
B'ahava v'livriut (with love and to our health),

Rabbi Rachel Timoner, Executive Director/COO Alan Herman, President Rob Raich and CBE's Executive Committee