

PENINSULA TEMPLE SHOLOM

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Wednesday, March 17, 2021

Dear Friends,

Since we last communicated [about COVID-19 in late November](#), we have all been on a wild ride. California and our local community moved from the red tier, to purple, to the regional stay at home order, back to purple and red, and now in orange again. Read more at [covid19.ca.gov](#). Most recently, the vaccine has become available for certain members of our community, giving us hope about being together in the not-too-distant future. The PTS COVID Task Force is working hard to track the changing circumstances and how they might impact activities at PTS. Public health and safety guidelines and the quality of services that we can provide continue to drive our decision-making.

State Tiers and PTS Policies

In the current orange tier, while places of worship may open for [modified indoor activities](#) (for example, no singing or chanting without masks), PTS is opting for continued virtual worship because we believe that it provides the safest and most meaningful experience possible in these circumstances. In addition, social gatherings continue to be strongly discouraged and limited to a small number of households. Therefore, other than preschool classes, which operate under a particular set of guidelines and licensing, and a limited number of outdoor youth programs, we have not yet begun to hold small group gatherings at the synagogue.

Activities such as singing and chanting negate the risk-reduction achieved through six feet of physical distancing

As San Mateo continues to move through the tiers, we will be looking for options for in-person gathering and worship. We will continue to offer drive-through opportunities as appropriate, and we are pleased to begin welcoming individual families to visit the sanctuary and/or memorial wall for private moments of reflection. Please contact [Shelly Smith](#) to make arrangements.

Because offices in the orange tier are encouraged to operate remotely, our staff continues to work from home other than for periodic essential onsite business. However, we are here for you. Although our analog phone system doesn't allow for easy live forwarding, know that your messages are sent immediately by email to the recipient.

Vaccinations

As you know, San Mateo County is offering vaccinations at several sites. It appears that vaccine roll out is finally ramping up and we encourage everyone to get a vaccination when it is your turn. To sign up for a vaccination visit [San Mateo County's vaccination web page](#). You can also go to the State's [MyTurn](#) website to check eligibility and sign up for notification when it is your turn. While getting a vaccination is great, please remember that we need to continue to practice social distancing and wearing of masks. Now is not the time to let down our guard. The value of saving a life should continue to drive our actions.

Resources

Attached to the letter is a [summary of San Mateo County guidelines](#), specifically for the Orange tier. If you have any questions, please let me know. In addition, visit these useful websites: [covid19.ca.gov](#) and [smchealth.org](#).

On behalf of Rabbi Feder, President Jon Herstein and our entire PTS team, thank you for your support and understanding throughout this extended time of separation. Stay safe and vigilant, and we look forward to seeing you soon.

Warmly,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Karen". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a long horizontal flourish at the end.

Karen Wisialowski

Chief Community Officer

[Click here for attached summary of San Mateo County guidelines](#)