

18th March 2020

Dear Member,

Our faith and our communities are part of our lives to bring us joy, but more importantly equip us for times of difficulty. The ongoing coronavirus situation is concerning, but whilst many elements of daily life are shutting down, our Jewish values will ramp up. Whilst we are having to distance ourselves physically, our communities can come closer together than ever before. We are here to do all we can to support our members and communities to not only get by, but thrive to the best of our ability no matter what the current situation brings.

Whilst the physical doors of the synagogue may be closed, our communities are open. We are meeting with communities on a weekly basis to do all we can to offer our help as we all adapt to the current situation.

On the Reform Judaism website, you can access our Covid-19 advice and resources page, which will be updated regularly with the latest information and a wide range of opportunities to engage in Jewish life during this time. Our Reform Judaism siddur and haggadah will shortly be available online and many communities are streaming services which all are welcome to join virtually. Our Youth Department and RSY-Netzer, our youth movement, will also be making activities and resources available for our children. All of this can be accessed through the dedicated page on the Reform Judaism website:

<https://www.reformjudaism.org.uk/covid-19-information/>

Pesach, the celebration of our freedom, is also on the horizon and the current guidance on gatherings may prevent your usual celebrations from taking place. Many communities will be running an online second night seder for all of their members to give everyone the opportunity to join with others at this special time of the year. If your community is not running their own online, you are invited to join Senior Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner virtually for second night seder - please email Sonia@rjuk.org to register and for more information.

At the Pesach seder, we read that in every generation our community has faced challenges, but our tradition and our community have enabled us to overcome them. That remains true today - our values as Reform Jews are as vital now as ever. We must recall the ultimate value of life and ensure we do our bit to suppress the spread of this illness to save lives. Then we must see the vulnerable in our communities and do all we can to help them. There seems to be a lot needed today to complete the vision of *tikkun olam* - repairing our world. Together, we can make a crucial start.

May we soon see an end to these uncertain times,

Rabbi Laura Janner-Klausner, Senior Rabbi to Reform Judaism
Rabbi Fabian Sborovsky, Chair, Assembly of Reform Rabbis & Cantors

P.S. To receive our updates directly please email Sarah@rjuk.org

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