

2 Nissan 5780
March 27, 2020

Dear Westchester Jewish Community,

The ongoing mandate to practice social distancing means that we are unable to physically come together to celebrate Passover this year. This year we must stay in our own homes. As much as we embrace our Passover traditions, they are superseded by the commandment of *pikuach nefesh*, of saving lives.

Therefore, this Passover, the executive committee of the Westchester Board of Rabbis **reminds and implores the Jewish community to gather only with the people who live in your home for seder and to forgo attending synagogue services and other public gatherings.**

We understand and empathize how hard this will be for many in our community. More Jews celebrate Passover than any other Jewish holiday. Along with the profound religious messages of the festival, we share special family traditions: recipes for favorite holiday foods, great-grandmother candlesticks, grandpa's worn and stained haggadot, games to keep the kids amused as we read our sacred tale.

Westchester synagogues have resources and suggestions for how to make Passover as meaningful as possible even with the restrictions of social distancing. Some traditions allow for technology to join congregations and families together. Others, whose practice forbids the use of technology on the holiday, have meaningful suggestions for celebrating the spirit of the festival in our own homes. Whether you belong to a congregation or not, **please call or email the synagogues near you for resources that will bring joy to your Passover.** You will also find resources on the website of the Westchester Jewish Council at www.wjccouncil.org.

May this latter-day plague soon pass so that we may once again join with our congregations, friends, and family to celebrate the blessings of our world. And just as we say, "Next year in Jerusalem," this year we add, "Next year here, in our homes, surrounded by loving friends and families."

L'Shalom u'Vracha,
With Peace and Blessings,
The Executive Committee of the Westchester Board of Rabbis

Rabbi Adam Baldachin
Rabbi Julie Hilton Danan
Rabbi Howard Goldsmith, Treasurer
Rabbi Daniel Gropper, President
Rabbi Evan Hoffman
Rabbi David Holtz, Immediate Past President
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