

From: [Clifford Miller](#)
To: [Covid Archive](#)
Subject: Fwd: BACK TO SCHUL TIME
Date: Wednesday, September 16, 2020 2:42:59 PM

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----- Forwarded message -----

From: **Clifford Miller** <abuelo39@gmail.com>
Date: Fri, Sep 11, 2020 at 12:41 PM
Subject: Fwd: BACK TO SCHUL TIME
To: Rabbi Ari Lucas <ALucas@agudath.org>
Cc: Lawrence Sturman <LawrenceSturman@gmail.com>

My niece Dr. Claudia Kretzschmer is a retired GI specialist in Athens Georgia. Her adult son Russel is recovering from corona virus. Here is her advice to Debby and me.
Clifford miller

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From: **Claudia Kretzschmar** <ck1154@hotmail.com>
Date: Fri, Sep 11, 2020, 7:30 AM
Subject: Re: BACK TO SCHUL TIME
To: Clifford Miller <abuelo39@gmail.com>

Cliff,

It sounds like you and Debby are doing a great job of keeping safe. If everyone would be as careful we could get back to life more normal much sooner.

I read a lot about the virus, vaccines, and treatments. To answer your question, it will be safe to congregate in large numbers when here immunity is achieved in your community. At that time there will still be precautions to take, but life will look more normal. Herd immunity happens with effective vaccines or with large numbers of people becoming infected and surviving. No one knows what percentage of the population needs to be infected to obtain herd immunity. Guesses I have seen range from 20% to 70% with most experts thinking that 50% to 60% will probably be adequate. Areas of the world hard hit with the virus, such as New York, are thought to be at about 20% right now. So we have a long way to go to obtain natural herd immunity.

The FDA is on record as stating that they will approve a vaccine that decreases the chances of getting sick with coronavirus to 50% compared to having no vaccine. They aren't aiming for something that will prevent infection as is true with the measles vaccine. They have set the bar low. This is similar to the flu vaccines we have had available for years. The problem with this virus is that about 50% of the spread is done by asymptomatic people. So, if the vaccine keeps you from getting seriously sick from the virus but does not keep you from getting infected with the virus, the virus can still spread among the population that is not immune and not socially distancing with masks, etc. The virus is too new for anyone to know how long immunity lasts and what that really means. Remember, this is a coronavirus, just like the common cold, and people can get reinfected with cold viruses many times. So the world will still be dangerous for those at high risk for

complications even after a vaccine is available and in general use. Eventually the virus will be limited by herd immunity, but many experts think it will be with us in one form or another forever, just like the common cold.

So, in addition to social distancing and masks, and in addition to a vaccine, we will benefit greatly from treatments for the infection. In my opinion, we can safely congregate when treatments are available that prevent the serious consequences of the infection. I suspect that will happen before the world achieves herd immunity, but time will tell.

Claudia

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From: Clifford Miller <abuelo39@gmail.com>

Sent: Thursday, September 10, 2020 6:08:31 PM

To: Lawrence Sturman <LawrenceSturman@gmail.com>; audrie sturman <audriesturman.sculpture@gmail.com>; Claudia Kretzschmar <ck1154@hotmail.com>

Subject: BACK TO SCHUL TIME

Dear Dr. Larry, and Dear Dr. Claudia,

Our Rabbi, Ari Lucas, sent a simple e-mail asking each member of the congregation under what circumstances we would feel comfortable returning to worship together in our sanctuary? I don't know what to answer.

For about half a year, services have been conducted via zoom, and Debby and I, along with dozens of others, members and non-members, in the Caldwell area and as far away as in Florida, New England, Canada or Israel, participate in daily evening and morning and weekly services very similar to what we did in the synagogue Library, Study hall, chapel and sanctuary in "normal" times.

A group of hardier, healthy, younger congregants has insisted on gathering together in person to pray as a "real" congregation. They stand outdoors, under a tent erected where we usually build the synagogue sukkah. X on the concrete marks separation distance of at least 6 feet. All wear masks and sign health waivers. Debby and I have visited the site when there is no group congregating there, but, at ages between 75 and 81, we have not attended services there.

We can visit friends outside their homes, in parks or on patios, wearing masks and not accepting any refreshments. We have not entered anyone's residence.

We have arranged grocery and other deliveries to our apartment lobby, or we have curbside pickup, as at our public library. Our daughter, Arielle, or her son, Zeke, or other nice young people have entered stores, masked, to buy for us. Medicines arrived by mail. Thanks to helpful virtual office visits, we avoided even medical or dental office visits except when really urgent (phlebotomy) and when we felt confident that all health precautions would be met.

Outside our apartment, we wear masks on our way to and from the mailbox or laundry room or while walking in the local park or cemetery, when anyone is in the vicinity. Joggers or cyclists have passed near us without masks, but only for an instant, not lingering.

High Holy day services also will be conducted via zoom or live streaming, except for a select handful of congregants invited to constitute a quorum, masked and at proper distance, while the cantor, masked, leads services (without any choir), reads Torah and sounds a shofar. Sermons are pre-recorded, off-premises.

When is it safe to congregate in synagogue in large numbers again? When a vaccine has been approved? When most of the community accepts vaccination? When everyone present at the service has been vaccinated? Or simply return now, masked, and maintaining distance?

We both recently tested negative for Covid19. What would you recommend? What would you and your children do?

Happy, healthy New Year, Cliff