

# NEWS & VIEWS

## Important Update about Hebrew College's Response to Coronavirus

Dear Hebrew College Community,

I am writing to let you know that, unfortunately, we learned yesterday afternoon that one of our community learning students tested positive for the coronavirus (COVID-19). Our thoughts are with her and her family, and we wish them a quick and full recovery.

Because this student attended a class at Hebrew College last week, we made the decision, in consultation with local medical professionals, to close the building as of the end of the work day on March 11 for deep cleaning and disinfecting. While the risk of exposure remains relatively low, we are acting swiftly and prudently because the health and well-being of our students, faculty, and staff are the College's highest priority. We also feel a deep sense of responsibility at this time to do our part to contribute to collective efforts to address and contain this serious public health risk.

This new development has accelerated our plans to move all of our graduate and community learning classes and Beit Midrash study to virtual instruction for the coming weeks. As of March 11, we are canceling all classes that meet in the Hebrew College building until further notice. We hope that it will not take more than a few days to prepare for a full transition to remote learning. During this time, staff will be working remotely. Please check our [web page](#) for updates on our progress toward that goal, and our plans for ensuring that our teaching and learning as a community continues.

We also want to take this opportunity to remind you of the general precautions recommended by the CDC. For easy access to clear and detailed information, follow [this link](#).

I am proud and grateful to be part of a community where people are responding to this unfolding situation with such flexibility, patience, resilience, and calm. I look forward to continuing to find ways to stay connected and care for each other, even as we take these precautionary measures that require greater physical distance for the time being.

With much appreciation,



Rabbi Sharon Cohen Anisfeld  
President, Hebrew College



*Posts from this [Hebrew College-hosted blog](#) are also published weekly in [Patheos](#).*

## Seeing God's Face in the Age of Coronavirus *Parashat Ki Tisa* (Exodus 30:11-34:35)

*By Cantor Ken Richmond, [Rabbinical student at Hebrew College](#)*

Purim, the annual topsy-turvy holiday that we celebrated this week, provides an opportunity for thinking about God's presence and absence, God's quality of seeming alternately hidden or revealed, as we listen to the only Biblical book without God's name and wonder whether the plot twists are ruled by God's will or by lottery, and whether the vicissitudes of the world are meaningful or capricious. This tension seemed even stronger this year, the Divine presence more hidden than usual, as people of all religious and political persuasions

united against a common enemy—the coronavirus. The holiday of joy took on elements of fear; some celebrations were canceled and others took place with trepidation (and attempts at improved hygiene), as a holiday of coming together as a community occurred with many of us in isolation.

Our Torah portion, *Ki Tisa*, also juxtaposes God's presence and absence, sometimes in jarring ways. The parsha begins with instructions for the building of the *mishkan*, the ultimate community-building experience, constructed through everyone's generosity and efforts, with the goal of encouraging God's presence to dwell in their midst. Suddenly we read that while Moses is communing with God on Mount Sinai, the people despair in his absence, and in what they experience as a corresponding lack of Divine presence or Divine attention, attempt to fill the void by building a Golden Calf.

[Read more](#)

# COMMUNITY LEARNING



May we be blessed....

By Lori Weiss, [\*Hebrew College Parenting Through a Jewish Lens\*](#) participant

As a mom of two and a clinical psychologist, I am often engaging in, reading about, or talking with others about parenting. However, in the hustle and bustle of parenting two young children, I had devoted little time to thinking consciously about how I wanted to infuse Judaism into our home. My children both attended the JCC for preschool, so they have had exposure over the last several years to Jewish holidays, Israel, the rituals of Shabbat, and *tzedakah*. Having recently joined a synagogue and with both children in Hebrew school on Sunday morning, I took the opportunity to go back to 'Hebrew school' myself to learn how to parent through a "Jewish lens" led by Rabbi Phillip Sherman at Temple Beth Elohim.

The parents in the class had children ranging from infants to elementary school age. Some took the class with a partner and others as individuals. We represented a wide variety of professions, Jewish upbringings, and Jewish identities.

[Read more](#)

# EVENTS

HEBREW COLLEGE ANNUAL SPRING EVENT

*Leadership, Learning  
& Love*  
*An evening of uplifting music and inspiring ideas*  
Wednesday, April 29, 2020

## Re-envisioning Jewish Inclusion in 2020 and Beyond: How Interfaith Couples & Families Belong

*A one-day program including panel discussion, text study, and presentations. Supported by the [Hebrew College Innovation Lab](#). Will now be held virtually. Stay tuned about how to join.*

March 26 | 8 am-4 pm | [Register](#)

Note: Please check our [website](#) for any updates or event cancellations due to COVID-19.



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