

Dear Kahal

As part of my commitment to keep you up to date with our community activity during this difficult time, I want first to reiterate that our priority is your health and welfare. As this unprecedented situation unfolds, I want to assure you that we are focusing all our efforts on responding to the needs of our entire community as well as heeding the advice we are receiving from Government and Medical Experts.

We are enormously grateful to everyone who has already so far offered their voluntary services since I sent out the request for support, and I urge all of those who are able, to come forward as soon as you can, to offer your time and help so that we can help as many of our community as possible.

Our volunteer effort is being led by Diana Zelouf and you can offer your volunteering services by emailing her at [support@sephardi.org.uk](mailto:support@sephardi.org.uk). As soon as she has received your kind offer, we will be in touch with you to discuss in what ways you can help us and to distribute tasks.

We need many more of us to volunteer to help- so please, if you are able, step forward and encourage others to do so. As a proud community with a long and illustrious heritage, it is incumbent upon us to come together to support our most vulnerable. We are asking for volunteers to, amongst other tasks:

- Help provide shopping services
- Offer prescription collection and delivery
- Act as a link between the individual and our offices
- Lend a helping word and hand (as far is possible at this time)
- To do whatever can be done to make the coming weeks more comfortable for those most in need.

If you can help us in any way please get in touch.

As well as these coordinated volunteering efforts, we are also mindful as we all try to manage our concerns for ourselves, our loved ones and our wider community, for the need for Rabbinic guidance as well as for spiritual and emotional support.

Over the coming days and weeks, our Rabbis and all our Trustees will be contacting by telephone the most vulnerable members of our Kahal, to offer support, reassurance and friendship at a time of social isolation and as a way for us to ensure we have a clear understanding of any specific needs.

As you would expect, our Rabbis are also busy supporting our communities:

#### **Rabbi Dweck**

In his role of Senior Rabbi, Rabbi Dweck is working closely with our office, our volunteers and his Rabbinic team including the Sephardi Kashrut Authority to make sure we are ready for Pesah and the disposal of Hametz, as well as with the Dayanim of our Beth Din concerning the most serious issues surrounding the virus and our laws of burial. He has already established a regular video update to the Kahal offering spiritual guidance and advice and is planning to broadcast services e.g. Kabbalat Shabbat from his home.

#### **Rabbi Morris**

Rabbi Morris at Bevis Marks is preparing a 'Seder in a box' to include other items in addition to Matzah and wine which he will endeavour to deliver to local members of his community.

He has also set up a WhatsApp group for those who would like to receive regular updates about activity in Bevis Marks and is sending out regular video updates and information about how to help. <https://chat.whatsapp.com/GBdqXqre51sDL6Y9OBSof0>

You can also sign up for the YouTube channel to watch Rabbi Morris's videos [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQrMk\\_yrxWg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TQrMk_yrxWg)

#### **Rabbi Kada**

Rabbi Kada has set up a WhatsApp group for Wembley congregants for staying in touch with each other, if you wish to be added please let him know [rabbikada@sephardi.org.uk](mailto:rabbikada@sephardi.org.uk). There will also be daily remote shiurim (see WhatsApp for details). Children in the local community are also designing cards to send to the elderly.

Our Rabbis are here to lead, comfort and teach us through these times, and each has stressed to me that if any of you would like to speak to any of them directly, they are just a telephone call away:

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#### **The S&P Sephardi Community**

119-121 Brent Street, London NW4 2DX  
T 020 8202 8811  
F 020 8202 8880  
[sephardi.org.uk](http://sephardi.org.uk)

The home of the Sephardi community since 1656

S&P Sephardi Community is the working name of charities in connection with the Spanish and Portuguese Jews' Synagogue  
Registered charity number 212517

### **Rabbinic Support**

To speak with Rabbi Dweck, please call 0207 4817 828

Rabbi Elia - 07904 587 721

Rabbi Kada - 07436 076 386

Rabbi Morris - 0207 481 7853

If they are not able to speak with you immediately, please leave a message and number and they have committed to calling you back as soon as they can.

Many of you are asking about what to do about Passover. Rabbi Dweck and his Rabbinic team are putting their advice together and we will be circulating this as soon as it is complete, which will include information on how to access the regular broadcasts and videos they will be producing in the run up to Pesah, with plans for live streaming services. In the meantime, we will be distributing Matzah and Kiddush wine to those most in need.

### **Other services**

We appreciate that at this time, families or individuals may be in need of other specific services, below are couple of helpful telephone numbers / links to websites - available to anyone who may need it.

### **JAMI**

- Tips for looking after your mental health during COVID-19 – download the PDF
- Jami updates – regular information on how to protect and boost your mental health and wellbeing on our website [www.jamiuk.org](http://www.jamiuk.org), Facebook and Twitter
- If you know of someone needing help, please contact us via our website or call 020 8458 2223.

### **Pesah Services**

Hermolis is offering a kosher for Pesach take away.

<http://www.hermolis.com/menus.php>

To order call 020 8810 4321 ext. 213, email [sales@hermolis.com](mailto:sales@hermolis.com) or WhatsApp 020 8066 3309 (not the number printed on the advertisement).

Deadline for orders is Thursday 26th March.

As a reminder: If you need any support, please do get in touch with us via our new dedicated email address: [support@sephardi.org.uk](mailto:support@sephardi.org.uk) or call Diana on 0207 481 7827.

Volunteers are especially needed- please use the same address or number to offer help.

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At this unfathomable time for all of us, I ask for your patience, forbearance and kindness. Our office is doing all it can to support you, whilst also facing the same worries, concerns and fears of us all. We may all have already heard stories of how, under such strain, people are feeling overwhelmed and sometimes feelings spill over into anger, frustration and aggression. At such a time, we will endure if we remember our duty to care and cherish each other, and to act with empathy and understanding.

I wish us all health, strength and all the support we need to get through the next few months.

David  
CEO S&P Sephardi Community

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