



# Philadelphia Is Yearning, Crying For Connection. Unbelievably Easy Way To Create Powerful Connection In Coronavirus Age

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*Help Is Here. What You Don't Know!*

PHILADELPHIA, PA, UNITED STATES, April 30, 2020 /EINPresswire.com/ -- Right after Pennsylvania told residents to stay at home and shelter in place, a very small synagogue, Historic Congregation [Keshet Israel](#), decided to do something unusual. According to Mark Levine, executive board member, "We had to focus on community. Community is the heart of everything we do at Keshet Israel and we wanted to help our community – not solely our members. We felt a sense of urgency and responsibility to serve the community where we are located and even the suburban community beyond Philadelphia".

Keshet Israel knew they would not be able to hold regular services for their own congregation and more than that they wanted to help other residents in their community who needed some spiritual uplifting and guidance during this pandemic. They thought outside their synagogue walls and outside their own congregation and members. Keshet Israel knew their entire Philadelphia and suburban Philadelphia community were seeking community, wanting to be uplifted and wanted to feel connected.

Keshet Israel began hosting virtual services over Zoom and Facebook Live not only to keep social distancing orders also to reach more residents who they could help by offering their services with no membership dues. While many other religious organizations have used Zoom and Facebook Live most have only shared those services with congregation members using private Zoom links and invitations or going live on closed/secret Facebook groups that you would only be a member of if you belonged to their congregation.

"This small synagogue is proud to be a model of connection (which is what 'Keshet' means) and community. This is the time to reach more people and not worry over who is paying dues. We believe it is essential to share a message of hope and belief to everyone at this critical time", said Levine.

Keshet Israel has had people attend their virtual services from Argentina, Brazil, Mississippi, New Jersey, Mexico and Chicago as well as many other areas. "People are seeking religious practice and prayers right now. This is the way we can practice religion and not separate ourselves from one another, at least virtually for now. We know that people need togetherness and through our virtual community outreach we are helping Philadelphia and surrounding residents get virtual programs that give them a sense of certainty during this uncertain time. People are anxious for connection and are grateful to us for providing what they are seeking", Levine said.

While sheltering in place may not give Philadelphia residents the sense of connection and community they seek, Keshet Israel is providing this. In fact, the synagogue says all are welcome to attend the Facebook Live services held right from their Facebook Page on Friday nights at 6:30 PM (EDT) and Saturday mornings at 10:30 AM (EDT). Members of the Jewish faith from all sects and with varying beliefs, non-Jews, as well as some agnostics, atheist's and people with no particular religious belief or upbringing have been attending and are fully welcome to attend. One attendee said, "Feeling connected to community is what I was missing. I attend every week

as I feel more comfort, inspiration and hope by praying with others and hearing the spiritual tunes and uplifting words. I am grateful to have a place to pray for family and friends and for the front-line workers, too”.

Kesher Israel has been serving the Philadelphia community since 1894. It has the longest running morning service in the Philadelphia region. Virtual services can be accessed on their Facebook page and all are invited to attend: <https://www.facebook.com/KesherIsraelPhilly/>.

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