>> Matan Koch: Good morning for those on the west coast, good afternoon for those on the east coast, good wherever you are for those everywhere in between. Thank you so much for joining us today for this seminar: "Opening Your Virtual Gates: Making Online High Holiday Celebrations Accessible to All." I am Matan Koch. I'm the director of RespectAbility's Jewish programming and I'm joined today by my friends and colleagues Rabbi Lauren Tuchman and Rabbi Darby Leigh. And we'll speak more of their biographies in a moment, so I'll leave it for that. And to be very clear of the purpose of today's webinar, and then a few housekeeping details: we have published - RespectAbility, Rabbi Tuchman and Rabbi Leigh have published a virtual guide for making your high holiday celebrations inclusive. And the main purpose of this webinar is to allow you to ask questions and clarifications of things that you did not feel were sufficiently covered by the guide, and to frame the guide in its context. I will be spending a few minutes going over its contents, but you are encouraged to read the actual guide. If any of the details of my presentation you want refresher on, they are all there in living color. And that means we really will enjoy that you continue to put questions in the question box from moment one to moment end. Our entire purpose for being here is to answer your questions. Now a little bit of housekeeping. We have, as we say in the guide one should have, both captioning and interpretation available for this webinar, which means that if you wish to access the captions, you can either click the closed caption button, or for a running transcript, go to a link that my colleague Eric Ascher will put into the chat box. And that you can pin the interpreter window if you would like to make the interpreter easier to see especially when we have shared screen. And if anyone needs guidance on how to do that, Eric is standing by in the chat box and and can give you more detail. Josh, next slide please.

So why are we doing this? We're doing this because 20 million people in the US are deaf and hard of hearing, which is about 48 million folks. And more than a million are blind and more than 12 million are low vision, which basically means, without running through all of these demographics, there are folks in your communities and congregations who have these access needs. It's not an "are there folks" it's a "there are folks." The statistics just are what they are. Now, a lot of what we're going to talk about are also helpful to others in your community. English language learners who have trouble, those who have trouble following Hebrew, those whose learning differences might make it a challenge to follow Hebrew, fellow verbal stuff - all of these things, the suggestions that we're about to offer will increase interpretation, especially captions, materials in advance and materials in alternate formats as we go to a digital world. Next slide please.

So here - just so that it's clear, we'll also put it periodically in the chat box - is the link to the guide that I just told you about. You see we have an action shot of Rabbi Leigh on the cover and a couple of other neat items. But really this entire webinar is to help you work with this publication, but that you should also feel free to download it, access it, send it to your friends, send it to people you don't like, send it to everybody. So the more people that have it, the more inclusion there will be this High Holiday season. Next slide please.

So I've already sort of told you who we are. I'm Matan Koch, you don't need to know any more about me. Rabbi Darby Leigh is the spiritual leader and senior Rabbi at Congregation Kerem Shalom. Again, we will have more of a bio in a moment. And Rabbi Lauren Tuchman is a speaker, spiritual leader and educator. And while I'm sure they will disclose this when they themselves speak, Rabbi Leigh is deaf and Rabbi Tuchman is blind. So not only are they Jewish experts, they are also experts from lived experience on the topic on which they speak. And we at RespectAbility believe it's so important to have people with lived experience as a part of the discussions in how to do this, and so we're so grateful that Rabbi Tuchman and Rabbi Leigh have joined us in this project. Next slide please.

So Rabbi Darby Leigh serves Congregation Kerem Shalom in Concord Massachusetts. He's a native New Yorker and a lifelong truth seeker. His rabbinate is characterized by creativity, inclusivity, and a commitment to diversity. Rabbi Darby describes himself as "committed to finding creative ways to engage Jews of all ages and all backgrounds and to creating welcoming and caring communities with intellectual honesty and spiritual depth." We will provide the presentation afterwards and you can read the rest of Darby's impressive biography, which is also in the guide. But that gives you a sense of who we are dealing with. Next slide.

Rabbi Lauren Tuchman is based in Washington, D.C. and is a sought-after speaker, spiritual leader and educator. Ordained by the Jewish Theological Seminary in 2018, she is, as far as we know, the first female Rabbi who is blind. She has taught in numerous synagogues and other Jewish venues throughout North America and was named to the Jewish Week's 36 under 36 for her innovative leadership concerning the inclusion of Jews with disabilities in all aspects of Jewish life. In 2017, Rabbi Tuchman delivered an ELI talk entitled "we were all at Sinai: the transformative power of inclusive torah." And you should all feel free to check that out and check out the rest of Rabbi Tuchman's bio in the guide as well. Next slide.

We're jumping right into the content here, and please remember - this is an overview. It's all in the guide, and the most important thing you can do is ask us the questions that you have. Use that question box and use it well. But really the whole process of preparing your virtual High Holiday service is that you're going to send out some form of invitation, right? You're going to let people know that the thing is happening, because otherwise they don't. And those invitations, the images and logos should have alt text - image descriptions for people who are blind and use screen readers. It's also best practice to have an option for the recipient to click through to access plain text, because alt text is great, but it's better if it's optimized for other types of disabilities as well. Some systems like Eventbrite are not accessible to people who use screen readers, and so you might want to think about other platforms. We have an entire webinar on the technicals of this that you can access at the link below. Next slide please.

And so during your sign up process, the most important thing you're going to want to do is ask people if they need accommodations. And provide someone who is the clear contact person by email and phone about which to talk about those accommodations. It does not necessarily mean that you can or will be able to meet every need. But, first of all, letting people know that the dialogue can start is critical. And seeing if you can work toward creative solutions is equally important. If nothing else, as we say at a later point in the guide, we encourage those synagogues and communities that are providing access features to share that broadly within your community, so that if someone reaches out to a synagogue that cannot, at the very least you can refer them there. But the point is, there has to be something in the sign up that lets people know that they can start that conversation, that you're open to it, that you're ready for it. Next slide please.

If you're going to be using material, which could include an online Machzor, to make this more accessible for times that are not the High Holidays, a Siddur, provide that in advance. There's a lot of technology - for instance a screen reader can't read the shared screen on a zoom, but a person who has the file separately can access it. If you're creating a document and distributing it physically, maybe mailing it to your community in this instance, consider making a copy available in Braille. We may have already missed the time frame for this, because the national braille press normally requires about 20 business days to get it done, and I haven't counted how many business days there are between now and Rosh Hashanah. But certainly it is something to keep in mind, and you have an extra eight - nine days before Yom Kippur. So maybe even if you can't get it done for Rosh Hashanah, you can still get it done for Yom Kippur. You'll note that some of the major publishers, for instance the reform and conservative movements, have made their Machzrim available in digital formats. You should link to those in the invitation, not just right at the service, and offer to email copies to those folks that would have trouble downloading it. Please note that if you have the option, PDF and Word documents can be made accessible to folks. If you're using something that's in a primary format it can't -- you know -- what's the word I'm trying to say -- in a proprietary format, that is not necessarily the case. So think about converting to a format that we know can be made accessible, and using the accessibility checklists within the guide and others to make sure that the document meets the need. Next slide.

So there are ways to get certain Machzorim in braille, in fact, Rabbi Tuchman and I spent a fairly significant amount of time trying to track down the information. Which means the first thing to understand is that it's not necessarily going to be an easy process for the folks in your community. And while it has to be done by the person requesting it who can reach out to some of the organizations on the slide and in the guide, you should provide spiritual guidance and support to the person making the reach out, either to Computer Sciences for the Blind that we talked about or the Jewish Braille Institute. Please note that as of this writing, the only modern machzor available from either of those sources is the reform machzor, but that there are old - early 20th century and mid 20th century versions - of conservative and orthodox machzorim. So as you're planning your services, one of the things we recommend that service leaders think about is talking with their congregants who would use these and figuring out will it be more or less distracting if they are using a different machzor than the rest of the community or just following along without a machzor. So that is -- and I realize that I'm being perhaps jargony for my audience. Machzor is the Hebrew word for the specific prayer book that we use during the High Holidays, and Appendix C of the guide lists out which ones are currently available. Next slide please.

So those are all in preparation for the event. Now that you've done the preparation, you're getting ready for services, what do we need to do to make sure that we can be accessible during the service? Well, you may notice right here on this webinar, we have an interpreter and we have a captioner. And it maybe, but is not necessarily likely, that they are totally fluent in English, Hebrew, Yiddush and ASL. But since those are in rare availability, rare form, you should - as you're presenting - make terms that you're going to use in another language available to the interpreter, along with the translation, because, for instance, when one is interpreting into ASL, which is its own language, it's useful to know what the word actually means. It's not just the question of reproducing the sound. When there are going to be multiple voices, the best practice is for each person to say their name every time they begin speaking. For events where everyone is visible and not speaking, those not speaking should be on mute, so that the moderator can take turns. I'm actually not going to read all of these points, because again, you can read them in the guide. But basically there are a few technical points of what we'll call the choreography of the Zoom session, and I do encourage you to read those in the guide or in the PowerPoint which we will distribute afterwards. Next slide.

So we are talking about -- we mentioned captioning and you'll notice that in this webinar we have what is called real-time transcription, which means there's a real human being sitting there typing my words as I talk. And that is very much the best way to do it. The automated services don't really do well with Hebrew and with the types of things that we will be experiencing during services, and a key thing to think about is providing, again, as much text as possible to the captioner beforehand. So that as they're writing out the things that you're saying, if there's Hebrew, if there's transliteration, they have all of that and they're able to put it in. In our appendix we have a list of captioning companies. If you do want to know more about automated systems for contexts other than the high holidays, you can read RespectAbility's secular events guide and the link is there on the slide. Next slide please, Joshua.

So in terms of ASL, you'll notice that we also have an ASL interpreter today. The first thing to be aware of is that it is a complete language, and it is a language that is the primary language for many of the folks that speak it, which means that when you're providing interpretation, not only are you providing access, but you're providing something even more special, which is that you're connecting to people in their own primary language. And this is as much a goal in accessing inclusion as is the ability to follow. So that's sort of the context. Now technically, when you're on Zoom, it's important to never spotlight a video other than the ASL interpreter, because then the people watching can't see the ASL interpreter. And the other is that you should hire an interpreter as early as possible, because there's a relative shortage of supply in most part of the country. Two weeks is sort of the minimum we recommend to start looking, but honestly, what we say is start looking as soon as you have the commitment that this is what you want to do. And be sure to certify that the interpreter is certified and experienced. And let them know that they'll be interpreting a public event. Next slide.

And so, this slide is called the cost of ASL, but what we're really talking about is conventions that you need to know. The most important is that you need a minimum of a two interpreter team if you're doing an event - a long event like a service, and not a short event like this webinar. And that since that costs about 80 to 125 dollars per hour -- so the total then for the captioner is about 160 to 200 dollars per hour for that two person team. Captioning has a bit of a range, but we've seen between 80 and about 125. So on the one hand this is something that you need to budget for. On the other hand, for a three-hour service that is the capstone event of your year, we are not talking about massive massive investments of funds. It's quite a manageable thing to make it so that people can access their services. Now once you've made that investment, let people know! We want as many people to use it as possible, and that means sharing. Because if you don't share it, then people who historically haven't been able to access your services will assume that they can't access your services this year, when in fact -- as I think Rabbi Leigh is going to talk about a little more in a little while -- this is a historic opportunity to make things more accessible, and in fact to break up the monotony of my voice, Rabbi Leigh, do you want to share a little bit about that idea just at this moment?

>> Rabbi Darby Leigh: Sure, if you would like me to.

>> Matan Koch: Yes!

>> Rabbi Leigh: Okay. So well, first of all, I want to say hello to everyone and I want to say thank you so much to you, to Matan, to Joshua, to RespectAbility for the opportunity to be here with you today. I really really appreciate it and I'm grateful for it. And so as you suggested Matan, I just wanted to add that some of you may be here and sort of are already committed to providing as much access as you can. Some of you may be sort of considering and learning and trying to figure out what you will or will not be able to do. And I want to just mention that this, as we all know, is a historic moment for all of us, for all of humanity, and particularly in the Jewish world. This is a historic moment in the Jewish world and the first time that our Highest Holy days will be sort of broadcast live in electronic medium. And I predict that this moment will be written about in Jewish history books and textbooks going forward, perhaps in the same way that we read about some historical events in the past. And so for those of us in the past who have found the question or the challenge of providing access to members of our communities with disabilities, families and friends, to pay attention to the fact that this is a new moment, and everything is different in this moment. And it actually seems to me personally that it could be even easier this year to provide access specifically to the deaf and hard of hearing communities in a way that might have been more challenging in the past. The technology is there, the services are all available, the costs are relatively nominal, and it just takes a little bit of energy, a little bit of effort, and a little bit of will on all of our part to decide that we're gonna go ahead and make it happen this year, even if we've never done it before. And I'll add one further note to that, Matan, before I turn it back to you, which is that I'm also aware that sometimes folks who are well intentioned want to provide access to the deaf and hard of hearing communities, for example, but might be intimidated or afraid to do so and concerned about getting it wrong or not doing everything right. And I want to remind us all of this wonderful expression that perfection is the enemy of the good, and that being afraid to do anything because a mistake might be made, maybe a captioner will type a word wrong, maybe the interpreter will have to interrupt a speaker to ask for repetition - that that's all okay. I actually think it's better, more meaningful, and much more important to make the effort to provide the access in the first place, knowing that it may not be perfect is all right, Knowing that you may not be able to do everything that you want to do is okay. Taking those first few steps to provide whatever greater access you can at this moment than you have in the past is in itself a mitzvah, it is a good deed, it is something worthy of doing. And I want to use this opportunity in this platform to encourage all of you to take those steps this year, and to make your community, your services and your [hebrew], days of our experiences ever more accessible to even greater numbers of people in our community than perhaps you have been able to in the past.

>> Matan Koch: Yes, thank you Rabbi Leigh, and can we go move to the next slide?

Then, once you've done all of this you have yet another resource that you can provide which is to set things up after the service. Now obviously our goal, our desire, is that people participate with services in a live format but we also recognize that just as Rabbi Leigh was just saying, we have a unprecedented access opportunity this year, which is that people that for whatever reason, disability or otherwise, can't be on at the moment that you're having services could watch those services later in the day, later in -- also, they could be in a different time zone, and so these are steps that you can take to make sure that even if you've done what you can to provide access during the presentation, during the service, you can make sure that your videos are fully accessible by making sure that the captions are accurate, that they include descriptions of things like laughter applause and music.

Ways to get that done -- next slide please -- and within the guide we have a step-by-step, technical steps on how to do some captioning. I'm really not going to go over that here, so we'll just let you read that in both the presentation and the guide, and of course ask in Q&A if you would like to know. Next slide.

And with everything that we do here at RespectAbility, for more information you can go to our website, you can download the guide, if you have a specific question for me or for the Rabbis, other than the ones that we're about to address in our Q&A period, you can email joshuas@respectability.org, who will make sure that the question gets to me or to the Rabbis. Next slide.

So now we've come up on our Q&A period and before I start posing some of your great questions, we've heard a little bit of Rabbi Leigh's framing and perspective on this guide. And I wanted to pose the same question to Rabbi Tuchman, which is that as you think about this process and this holy moment that we're in, what thoughts would you offer to frame us? And Joshua, if you can take down the PowerPoint so that we can not have a shared screen while this is going on, and then we can have sort of a more open dialogue. So Rabbi Tuchman.

>> Rabbi Lauren Tuchman: So thank you so much Matan and Joshua and Rabbi Leigh and RespectAbility for this incredible webinar, and it's just such an honor to be with you all today. And it was truly an honor to help put this guide into the world. So I agree very much with what Rabbi Leigh was talking about when he was talking about framing this as a historic opportunity. We are in a time of tremendous change, and one of the ways in which that's manifesting is that we are in a world now where so much is virtual, online, all these things we know and have become accustomed to. But at the same time jewish content and experiential learning has been more accessible than ever before. And as someone who's blind, I think about this in terms of how easy it is for me to go to a class in California, even though I'm right outside of Washington, D.C., or do something in New York from the comfort of my desk, or any of those things. And similarly with services, the widespread accessibility of services, I truly believe will bring more of our people into the fold in a deep way and give them the opportunity to have these experiences that may not have been so accessible. And I want to talk specifically for my lived experience as a Rabbi and as a blind woman, and talk a little bit about the new reality that we are in where we do have, as we described and we may talk about this a bit later in the Q&A, we talked a little bit about machzor, about High Holiday prayer book accessibility, but we're also now in a time where things are easier and easier to distribute because everything is digital. You don't necessarily -- except if you're doing hard copy braille which is a separate conversation. But if you have digital accessibility all you have to do is send an email. It is wonderful to be able to go to a lecture online or a service online. And this happened to me yesterday. I emailed somebody and said "can you send me the source sheet? I don't have a copy of it." Next thing I know there it is. Right? So accessibility is faster, it is much more seamless, because we don't have to worry about did I get it enough time in advance to print it out in braille. Because I'm in my office, my embosser is literally a foot from me. So I just really want us to be thinking about - this is a time we talk a lot about T'shuvah, about returning during the month of Elul, the last month of the hebrew calendar. And now this is a really exciting chance for us to do a lot of that turning and returning when it comes to disability accessibility. So many of us want to do the work and as Rabbi Leigh so eloquently said it takes a lot of will, intention, desire, and really values proposition on all of our parts to make that happen. So thank you all again for being here and I wish you all a meaningful Elul.

>> Matan Koch: Thank you Rabbi Tuchman. So I want to encourage everyone to continue putting questions, or start putting questions in the Q&A box and in the chat box, or if you prefer the chat box to the Q&A box. I'm gonna start -- there's a technical question about is the one cap app a service for captioners or a service that provide captioners? My understanding, which we can confirm afterwards, is that the app is is owned by a company that also provides services. I think it's in fact the one that we are using right now for this webinar. So both and although the app itself might not be the thing and -- Darby, Rabbi Leigh, looks like you have something you might want to add.

>> Rabbi Leigh: So may I respond to this question?

>> Matan Koch: Sure, absolutely.

>> Rabbi Leigh: Thank you. So I don't know anything about a lot of different specific companies and so I can't speak to this specific company of cap app, but I do want to highlight one of the points in the guide that Matan spoke to earlier which is the difference between CART or real time captioning access, and automated transcription or computer speech to text transcription. And I just want to highlight the point that the speech to text transcription, while it may be acceptable and fine in limited uses, in certain specific contexts, the technology is not really developed yet to be at a level that I personally as a deaf person would find acceptable as the consumer to use for an event like a religious service. There are far too many errors, far too many inconsistencies, and far too many gaps in technological speech to text transcription. So for our sacred observances of [Hebrew], days of awe and High Holy Day services, I would -- and yes, something is better than nothing, and perfect is the enemy of the good. But as Matan pointed out and as the guide points out, CART captioning access in real time where there is a live person typing on a CART stenographer machine to provide real-time captioning access is a much more accurate way of being able to create visual text for the audio information that is being shared. And the best way to work with Hebrew language and vocabulary is to provide the captioner with as much transliteration - that is Hebrew words written out in English letters - as possible. Entire prayers that will be recited can be provided in transliteration to the captioner ahead of time so they can simply pull that up at the appropriate moment in the service and provide not only the deaf and hard of hearing with the text-based access to the service, but also folks who are older who have trouble -- difficulty hearing, folks who may have lost a little bit of hearing later in life, folks who may be paying attention in environments that are noisy with small children screaming in the background, perhaps. Captioning access is for so many more people than only for the deaf and hard of hearing community. So I just wanted to highlight that important piece of information.

>> Matan Koch: Thank you Rabbi Leigh. The next question is -- really, this may also be one to be first answered by Rabbi Leigh and it is: would one provide an interpreter if no one who is deaf has registered? Might that be considered disrespectful to the signer? Now my -- just offering my own two cents, since this is the type of public event that someone can register up until the last minute, you won't know if someone is going to benefit from it, or from it in the video, until -- um sorry uh until you're actually done your event and after. But Rabbi Leigh, what is your perspective on respect to the interpreter, disrespect to the interpreter, should we, should we not? I think you can see the question in the chat box, right?

>> Rabbi Leigh: That is a wonderful question, first of all, so thank you so much to whoever raised it and asked it. You're going to get a Jewish answer which is yes and yes, and maybe, and maybe no. It also depends on the individual and on the community. I can understand why some individuals might view it as disrespectful. If you are doing your very best to provide access, the first thing to do with respect to providing access to the deaf and hard of hearing community is to try to have a relationship with that community, to try to find out if that communication access is desired, being requested, and to ensure that they know that it's taking place so that they will in fact have the opportunity to be there. We'd all like to avoid situations in which we are providing access and we don't think that access is being utilized. And yes - as Matan said, it's entirely possible that even if you don't have a request for it ahead of time, someone will appreciate use it and benefit from it during the day of, and offering that as a way in could never be perceived as disrespectful. I think the concern for the disrespectful perception comes from the degree to which North American hearing society tends to view American sign language with almost a slight fetishization, if I'm pronouncing that right. It's almost an attractive oddity, as it were, where so many people will report, "oh the sign language was so beautiful. I couldn't stop watching the interpreter," and almost as if there's something moving or inspiring about knowing that that's happening, without taking into consideration that it's simply translating to another language just as any other language would be translated by an interpreter. And we certainly want to avoid situations in which we are presenting sign language as this beautiful thing to look at and to watch and be entertained by, and oh, "aren't we so wonderful and good for having provided this ASL interpreter?" We want to stay away from scenarios that might feel like that, and stay closer to a scenario where we have real relationships with folks who are deaf and in the hard of hearing community and we are providing language access to folks who will want it and use it, and we intend to do that. And if someone doesn't show up, or if they're ill and can't make it at the last minute, that interpreter will be there to provide access to this service, and as Matan said, if it's recorded and you're showing it after the fact, you'll never know how many hundreds or thousands of people will benefit from having that particular access.

>> Matan Koch: Thank you Rabbi Leigh, and it looks like Rabbi Tuchman you have something you want to add to that?

>> Rabbi Tuchman: Yeah, so I want to respond directly to what Rabbi Leigh was talking about around relationship. I can't speak to the interpreter piece, so I entirely defer to Rabbi Leigh on that question. But I do want to speak for a moment in response to what Rabbi Leigh was talking about relationship. I am very much in the same camp. It is extraordinarily important to have a relationship with people who are blind or low vision, knowing that every individual has their own way of doing things. We are, as was mentioned in the beginning of this webinar, we are a relatively small community - about a million folks who are completely blind and then another 12 million who are low vision. But even still, there are some things that are kind of standard accommodations and then there are other things that tend to be individualized based on what a person's preferences are. The most important thing is to have a relationship with the community or with individuals in that community. It is really important because I cannot tell you how many times, even outside of the High Holiday context, just in general, there are often really well intentioned people who think of an amazing access solution for the blind community and this is going to totally be life-changing. But without the relationship, we don't know if that's actually something that they want. Right? So if you have questions about accessibility for blind and low vision people, your best source are the people with the lived experience, and that lived experience is varied because everyone is their own individual. I know, for example, I'll use myself as an example, I am a very passionate promoter of braille literacy, similarly to what Rabbi Leigh was saying, braille is a -- we call it a code. It is a tactile representation of written language. So there is Hebrew braille, there's English braille, there is Aramaic braille, and so often when I was in services in person, there would be the people who would come up to me afterwards and say "I couldn't focus on my prayers, because it was so beautiful to watch you reading the braille? Can I feel your sidur?" And on the one hand, I'm grateful that people are interested in Hebrew braille and it's something I'm very passionate about. And on the other hand, this is not a performance, just as sign language interpreting is not a performance - that is interpreting into its own language. So to a person who's reading braille, a person who's using some other kind of access technology that is allowing them access into the sacred, it is not a performance and we don't enjoy being told that either we are being gawked at or that other people are fascinated by our way of praying. It's really really important to understand that these are just simply -- braille is simply how I read, how I access the sacred, and how I am in relationship with the text. So I really just wanted to amplify what Rabbi Leigh was saying and underscore how important lived relationship is.

>> Matan Koch: Thank you Rabbi Tuchman. I will only add as a coda, because the questioner followed up, that sometimes interpreters get angry. I will offer two thoughts. One is that if you have the patience and the energy to engage in the discussion you can discuss with them all the wonderful things that the Rabbis just said about why. If not, I think you simply say "look, it is our philosophy to provide as much access as possible, so we hired you for that purpose and we're so grateful that you came and did that thing for which we hired you to do." And you sort of emphasize that this is a service that you've obtained because you want to be more accessible, and that you don't necessarily need to justify to the person that is providing it for you that you chose to provide the service. I wouldn't let yourself feel like the worry about that confrontation is going to keep you from creating the access that you would like to create and following the values that you would like to follow. Now we have two questions in the question box that were of a technical nature and my colleague Eric Ascher, who is our technical expert has actually volunteered to answer those. So I'm going to - for a moment - turn the virtual microphone, as it were, over to my colleague Eric Ascher. I believe the first was about the difference between setting up an event as a Zoom meeting or a Zoom webinar in terms of having the interpreter visible.

>> Eric Ascher: Hello everyone. I'm going to leave my video off because I was not planning on speaking today, so I'm not dressed as nicely as I would like to be. So the difference between a zoom meeting and a zoom webinar - there's no real difference in regard to whether or not the ASL interpreter can be visible. So RespectAbility, what we've been doing the past several webinars we've been having, is we spotlight the interpreter so that people watching on Facebook Live can see the ASL interpretation, because we share all our webinars to Facebook Live now. People watching on Zoom can - if the host allows them - choose whatever view they want. And gallery view lets them view both the interpreter and any speakers. One other best practice that we follow is when people are not speaking, we encourage them - who are not on the panel at a meeting for example -- we encourage them to turn off their cameras, because with fewer people on the screen it's easier to find the interpreter amongst the grid of people. So that one I answered in the chat already. And the other question is in a longer service with two ASL interpreters, how do we arrange this fell off the interpreter - I'm assuming that means switch off - since they can't give each other a visual indication we need a break. A lot of times what we've noticed is that when interpreters -- the other interpreter will turn their video on and it'll just -- and then the other one will turn them off, so they usually work it out amongst themselves that we've noticed. And are there other things the tech team needs to know about making sure the active interpreter is visible, and I covered that in the previous one. I think that's it for me but thank you guys.

>> Matan Koch: Thank you so much Eric Ascher for being willing to jump in and provide us all with the benefit of your technical knowledge. And I'll actually take this moment, since we've run about 10 Jewish webinars in the last couple of months, and none of them could have happened without Eric's technical wizardry making that happen, to say that that expertise that you just heard is expertise from which we regularly benefit. And it's been noted in the chat - and this is true - that spotlighting the interpreter can also be helpful for folks accessing by iPad, where it can be not possible to do gallery view whilst a screen share is showing, which actually is a good reminder that is a good accessibility practice - while screen share is good if there is something that you definitely need to share, you'll notice that we dropped the screen share for this Q&A period, since screen share somewhat limits access, the less time that we can spend with screen share up in any virtual presentation, the better. So for instance, I would not - if you have distributed a virtual Machzor, necessarily do a screen share for your entire service with the Machzor up, because you've limited access for lots of other folks. So that is something to think about. At the moment, there are no other questions in either the question box or the chat, and while we do have some minutes left, we had said we only want to keep going as long as we're answering your questions. I want to take a moment to encourage those whose questions have not yet been answered: this is the moment to put them in the Q&A, to put them in the chat. The whole reason that we are here is to answer your questions. While we're waiting for those to pop up, either Rabbi Tuchman or Rabbi Leigh - do you have any thoughts or wisdom that there hasn't been the appropriate moment to share and this is just the moment to do it?

>> Rabbi Leigh: Be careful what you wish for whenever you ask a Rabbi to start speaking. It may be difficult to get them to stop.

>> Matan Koch: Well we'll stop you at about 90 seconds once we see if we have any questions. But if you have any wisdom that you want to offer now whilst people are thinking of their next set of questions before we sign off - Rabbi Tuchman, it looks like you have something to share.

>> Rabbi Tuchman: Yeah. So as Rabbi Leigh said, when you get a Rabbi started talking -- I would like to say that in terms of accessibility best practice, as is mentioned in the guide and I just kind of want to emphasize this - by far the best file formats are Word and PDF, especially if you are a screen reader user. There are some very wonderful apps now that really handle PDFs beautifully, and I just encourage -- another thing that i strongly encourage, especially if you have a multilingual document, is to note that sometimes tables can be really complicated and screen readers tend to render them badly. I just finally learned that the reason for that is because, by default most screen readers automatically read from left to right. I'm sure that has something to do with the ways in which latin language systems are predominant in terms of access technology, which is a larger conversation not for this moment. But knowing that, it's really helpful to instead of having tables, I would suggest putting -- if you have the Hebrew on top but then the English below it, or if you have the Hebrew on one page and the English on another page, that's a good way around that. If you have a table where you have the two columns of text, let's say you have the Torah reading for the first day of Rosh Hashanah, and you have the English on the one side and the Hebrew on the other. Sometimes if you're using a screen reader, that can get really jumbled and difficult, especially because screen readers are by their nature auditory. And when you are listening to a service it is really hard to simultaneously follow with a screen reader, so often folks who are going to be using digital documents will want to look at them ahead of time. So just putting those -- putting that out there is just a guide to thinking about your document accessibility, and also to note that if you are a VoiceOver user, which is the screen reader for the iOS operating system, there is a Hebrew speech engine. So just wanted to put that out there as well. Thank you!

>> Matan Koch: All right, thank you Rabbi Tuchman. We do have another question now in the Q&A box, which is saying that in the past when interpreters were not fluent in Hebrew, that they had provided page numbers from the machzorim, so that deaf attendees could read along with the prayers. "Should we do that differently this year?" I'm going to let the others speak to anything additional, but I will say that what we note in the guide is that it is useful to provide a run of the service both to your interpreters, and frankly to anyone who requests it in advance, that will give them an entire sense of what's going on. Now, that may not be page numbers anymore, because you're using digital formats. But it may be at this point we're going to be looking at this source sheet. At this point, the rabbi is going to be speaking... just make sure whatever is the best way to describe what is actually going on, you provide. It could be page numbers in the PDF. It's just making sure that whatever you are doing is reflected in the instructions that you provide to the captioners, to the interpreters, and really to anyone who requests it. That's sort of what we've said in the guide. Now I don't know if either my co-authors have anything to add on that point. Rabbi Leigh?

>> Rabbi Leigh: Thank you. So yes, I agree support and agree with everything that you've said. And I want to sort of get back to one of Rabbi Tuchman and my original points which is that so much of providing access is about relationship. And this is another beautiful example of where being in relationship with the consumer, with the deaf individual or hard of hearing individual who is viewing the ASL interpreter for communication access, will be super helpful to you, because you can simply ask them the question: "what would you like the interpreter to do when we enter into a particular Hebrew prayer? Would you like a page number? Would you like instructions for what to read on your own? Or would you like" - and again, there can be different levels of access provided - "would you like the Rabbi to potentially provide the interpreter with an English translation so they can attempt to sign roughly the meaning of the prayer while it is being expressed verbally?" And that kind of response and decision about what happens during a Hebrew text that's being shared during a service can be determined by the actual players involved and individuals who are requesting the access in the first place. I think a good default point is to follow the instructions in the guide, as Matan said. But again, if you are in relationship here's a beautiful way to ask an individual "what would be most useful for you when we arrive at this particular prayer moment?"

>> Matan Koch: Thank you Rabbi Leigh, and I think that's such good guidance for dealing in general. Ask someone what works for them. Someone just put in the question box wanted us to remind folks that because of the way PDFs work, oftentimes the page number in the PDF and the page number in an original paper version can be vastly different. So just make sure you're providing people with page numbers that they can use. If you're using your script from a previous year and it turns out it doesn't match your PDF, do that. And it looks like Rabbi Tuchman has something to add on that point. Rabbi Tuchman? Rabbi Tuchman: Very briefly to that point. I can guarantee you that 99 percent of the time if you have a braille reader in your congregation or you have a blind person using the PDF, the page numbers, as was just mentioned about PDFs, will not be the same. So rather than saying "pick up with the third paragraph at the bottom of the page," that is not useful for a blind person. Please say instead, "we are starting with the words x y and z." Matan Koch: Very helpful. And it was mentioned that some might still be using the physical book, so it might be worthwhile to provide both numbers. And again, going back to a previous discussion, my colleague Eric Ascher suggests that we remind folks that while Word documents are inherently accessible to blind users PDFs actually have to be affirmatively made that way. And the guide does give you some guidance in how to do that. So do not assume that your PDF is already default accessible, rather, make sure that you're doing that work. Well, we are getting close to the close of our time. If anyone has any more burning questions, put them in the question box. We have the slight update that you can see in the chat box that even Word documents may not be inherently accessible if they have images, but otherwise I really want to thank my colleagues Rabbi Tuchman and Rabbi Leigh, not just for their presence here today and for what they've been adding and for the leadership there, but for really collaborating with us at RespectAbility to put this guide together and to make it what it is. When we first thought about doing this project, we were sort of building off of our own knowledge base, and it was going to be what it was, it was going to be something. But really, the contributions of Rabbi Tuchman and Rabbi Leigh are why it is such a powerful resource that it is today, with their wisdom, their knowledge, their insight, their lived experience all being put to use and all obviously on display with us today. Again, if you have further questions for any of us, you can email JoshuaS@RespectAbility.org. Please go to the website, download a copy of this. If you already have it, please share it as widely as you can. We are privileged that among all of our co-promoters are the reform movement, the conservative movement, and the reconstructionist movement so we are hoping that our goal of getting this in the hands of everyone leading services this year will be a reality. But you can each help with that by sharing it with anyone whom you think might find this a resource. Let us, as Rabbi Leigh envisioned for us, make this the most accessible High Holiday period ever. Take the lemons that life has dealt us with this pandemic, and make lemonade of accessibility. So I want to thank everyone, I want to wish you all a shana tova umetuka, a good and a sweet new year, from me, from my fellow panelists, and from all of us here at RespectAbility to you. And may 5781 bring with it joy and access and the new level of inclusion and strength for our communities. Thank you so much.