

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

420 WHITEHALL RD., ALBANY, NY 12208

E-mail: office@bnaisholom.albany.ny.us

APRIL 2018

Phone: 518-482-5283

visit us at <http://www.bnaisholom.albany.ny.us>

NISSAN/IYAR 5778

JOIN US FOR THESE SERVICES AND STUDY SESSIONS

Friday, April 6	YIZKOR and KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	6:00 PM
Saturday, April 7	TORAH STUDY: <i>Shemini</i>	9:30 AM
Wednesday, April 11	ALBANY YOM HASHOAH OBSERVANCE	8:00 PM
Friday, April 13	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Saturday, April 14	EXTENDED STUDY – Ecclesiastes	9:30 AM
Friday, April 20	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Saturday, April 21	TORAH STUDY: <i>'Aharei Mot-Kedoshim</i>	9:30 PM
Friday, April 27	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE; YOBS Shabbat	8:00 PM
Saturday, April 28	TORAH STUDY: <i>'Emor</i>	
Friday, May 4	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	6:00 PM
Saturday, May 5	EXTENDED STUDY – Ecclesiastes	9:30 PM

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation, a Reform Jewish synagogue, is a community that fosters individual, family and congregational spirituality by engaging in worship and prayer, promoting learning on all levels, supporting each others' needs, bettering our community and our world, and forging connections with worldwide Jewry.

We take pride in being warm, welcoming, informal, progressive, open-minded, diverse, and participatory.

We strive to create a vibrant Jewish present, linking our ancient traditions with the promise of the future.

From our Rabbi...

Next Year in Jerusalem!

For somewhere between five hundred and a thousand years, Ashkenazic Jews have ended their seder with these words. Within the last month, and probably having nothing to do with Passover, several people have asked about a congregational Israel trip. Since 1995, we've run 8 such trips, taking over 100 congregants to Israel. Now would be a good time to start planning one, and if you may be interested, pay close attention, and respond to this!

WHEN? *Summer 2018? Fall 2018? Late December/Early January 2019? Presidents' Week 2019? June 2019? When is best for you? What does not work for you?*

B'nai Sholom was one of the early pioneers of Presidents' Week, which has become popular for American congregations. It's the low season (i.e. less expensive), and not hot. We hit a little bit of rain over the years, and maybe a little snow once or twice, but it melts in a few hours. Summer can be hot, and is dry: no rain whatsoever May-August. It more expensive, and there are high school groups everywhere. The last week of December can also be rainy, and is a popular and therefore more expensive time to go. The most expensive hotel rates are during Israel vacation periods, i.e. during the holidays of Sukkot and Passover, and I'm not available.

ITINERARY: We will definitely see the Western Wall and the Old City of Jerusalem, include a visit to the Church of the Holy Sepulcher. We'll hope to be able to go up to the Temple Mount and into the Golden Dome, but that's not always possible. We'll take the cable car up to Masada and bathe in the Dead Sea. In the Galilee we'll go to Safed to see the artists' colony, and the synagogues and cemetery of the masters of Kabbalah. We'll visit the Baha'i Gardens in Haifa, the old port city of Jaffa, and enjoy some time in Tel Aviv. We've always visited the Golan Heights, and I think we're due to visit a winery for a tasting. We always visit one of the two great excavated archeological water systems, either Hazor, or Megiddo, which you might know by its Greek name of Armageddon. The Roman excavations at Beth Shean, and at Caesarea, with the imposing amphitheaters, are always fascinating. We'll visit the Crusader-era fortress in Akko, which repelled Napoleon in 1799, and was the site for the prison rebellion depicted in the 1960 Otto Preminger film "Exodus." Yes, it was filmed there, too. One year we spent more time down south and visited the Ramon Crater, and went into Jordan for the day to see Petra. *There are plenty of other things we'll see, and the itinerary will be decided by those who express interest this spring.*

ROUTE: We will fly non-stop from either Newark or Kennedy. We'll get to the airport by chartered bus from B'nai Sholom.

COST: The cost will not be available until we finalized the dates and itinerary. I expect the number to be \$4500 +/- 500 per person double occupancy for a 10/11 day trip, which would include airfare, hotel, touring in our own bus with driver and guide, breakfasts, maybe half the dinners. Additional would be some other meals, bus to NYC airport, tips to guide and driver (pre-collected), personal expenses, travel insurance (which is highly recommended). The single supplement could be around \$1000, and we can't guarantee a roommate.

WHAT ELSE: I've always run a series of three workshops to prepare people for the trip, and created my own guide, to help you deal with spending money, food, weather, sites, clothing, packing, luggage, telephones, etc. etc.

DEADLINES: If there is enough interest ("10 righteous people") we'll get a proposal, and with that price in hand begin asking for deposits, which will be refundable if the trip doesn't pan out. At some point (perhaps 120 days) we'll need a second payment to cover the plane flights, and final payment is due 61 days before departure.

WHO: Anybody is eligible to come with us. It's mostly congregants, of course, but we've had in-laws, college roommates (she was a minister, to boot), even complete strangers that were looking for a group trip when we were going. Bring your friends, bring your family.

Please let me know in writing soon of your interest in spending some time *Next Year in Jerusalem*. And if not for you in the year to come, I hope that when you utter the phrase during the seder, you make it sound like a genuine hope for your future.

Best wishes for a joyous and rewarding Passover.

Yom HaShoah- Holocaust Memorial Day

On Wednesday April 11, B'nai Sholom will host the Albany Jewish community for the community observance of Yom HaShoah at 8 pm. The service will include the lighting by survivors of yahrtzeit candles (yellow from the yellow Star of David victims were forced to wear to identify themselves as Jews), solemn moments of memorial prayers (including Kaddish and El Malei Rahamim), and readings appropriate to the day reflecting sorrow, historical experience, personal reflections, and reactions. The service will reach a hopeful conclusion with the singing of Hatikvah.

One of four modern Jewish holidays, Yom HaShoah's full name is Holocaust Heroes' and Martyrs' Remembrance Day. The date of the holiday (27 Nisan) was established by the Israeli Knesset based on the date of the Warsaw Ghetto Uprising. B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation is one of five local synagogues that rotate the hosting of Yom HaShoah. Yellow candles will be available at B'nai Sholom from March 20, while they last, on a table outside the sanctuary.

Passover Seder



We would like to be able to match up congregants in need of seder places with people who would be welcoming of guests. If you have spots at your table, or are in need of a place to go, please notify the office as soon as possible.

Mitzvah alert!

The Social Action Committee is looking for volunteers to work at the Sister Maureen Joyce Center Soup Kitchen on Sunday May 6 from 11-2. Anyone interested please call Steve Klein at 526-2651 or email him at steven.klein@cseainc.org.

A Nominating Committee has been appointed for officers and trustees. The members are: Mimi Bruce- chair, Barb Devore, Liz Gingrich, Julie Friedman, Gary Hoffmann, Jodi Kerper, and Roy Fruiterman.



Volunteer Dinner & Shabbat Service

B'nai Sholom's bi-annual event for synagogue volunteers

Volunteers and their families are invited to come and enjoy a Shabbat dinner prepared by the Member Events Committee and the Board.

Place settings, beverages, and delicious food will be provided.

Friday, May 11th 6:30 p.m. Dinner; 8 p.m. Shabbat Service

This special event requires a timely RSVP to provide

the cooks time to prepare large dishes.

RSVP to Deb Nozik by April 27th via phone 439-7008

or email dnozik@aol.com

Sponsored by Your Member Events Committee

SOCIAL ACTION STUDENTS IN THE LEAD ON GUN CONTROL

Have you thought about where you stand in the gun debate? Do you want to see changes made to our gun laws? Do you want to take action?

Here are links to national, state and local groups involved in the issue. Check them out and make your voice heard.

Religious Action Center (Reform Movement) rac.org/gun-violence-prevention

March For Our Lives facebook.com/March-for-Our-Lives-Albany-NY

Moms Demand Action for Gun Sense in America www.momsdemandaction.org

New Yorkers Against Gun Violence www.nyaqv.org

Every Town for Gun Safety www.everytown.org

Bethlehem Morning Voice Huddle facebook.com/Bethlehem-Morning-Voice-Huddle-1929911640368511

BSRC Board Makes Sweeping Changes in Dues for Young and New Members

At its March meeting, the B'nai Sholom Board of Trustees voted unanimously in favor of dramatic reductions in dues for new and/or younger members. The new dues policy is as follows:

- Dues are \$0 for individuals or families age 35 and under. Age is based on the age of the younger member of a couple with a family membership.
- There will be a phase-in to full dues from ages 36 to 40. (At 36 a member pays 20% of full dues; at 37, 40%; etc., until at 40 the member pays 100%.)
- Dues are \$0 for the first membership year for everyone, at any age.
- Anyone leaving and returning within 5 years is **not** considered a new member.
- Dues will be a quarterly, rather than annual, obligation.
- The building fund is eliminated. For current members who have already signed up to pay a building fund obligation and are still in the process of paying, we will forgive the remaining balance, but we encourage them to consider making a voluntary donation for some or all of the outstanding amount.
- The current policy of offering dues reduction to any member unable to pay full dues will continue unchanged. No one will be turned away for an inability to pay.

President Libby Liebschutz says, "I'm really pleased that the Board has taken this significant step as part of our efforts to attract new members." She notes, "We will be combining this dues policy with both an aggressive campaign to get the word out and programs to meet the needs of younger individuals and families who we hope will join."

Under B'nai Sholom's bylaws, while the full congregation votes on the budget at the annual meeting, the Board is vested with establishment of dues levels.

The Board's vote followed an in-depth analysis performed by an ad hoc committee consisting of Phil Teumim, Mark Reeder, Harvey Tress, Joan Savitt, Barbara Devore, and Libby. At a retreat of the board and committee chairs in November 2016, many expressed concerns that our dues were a potential barrier to new or even continuing members. Phil Teumim agreed to assemble a group to consider alternatives.

Phil, Mark, and Harvey, all retirees from the State Public Service Commission staff, analyzed various alternative dues structures, using an approach akin to the "rate design" analysis they were familiar with applying to utility rates. Their work became the basis for the committee's recommendation. Input from Joan, as Finance VP, was particularly important, as Joan was able to confirm that the congregation is currently financially healthy and can afford this change. She notes, "Any loss of forgone dues will be far outweighed by the benefits new members will bring to the congregation."

The Board concluded that the congregation has an important need for new members, particularly younger ones, not so much for their financial contributions but for their non-financial ones, as participants and leaders in our services, programs, and committees. Board members agreed with Phil, who, in presenting the committee's recommendation, said, "This policy to attain younger members will make the synagogue more vibrant and therefore more attractive to all members, young and old." Many shared Mark's sentiment, "This action is important to ensuring the continuity of our congregation."

"We look forward to welcoming new members in the coming year, for whom our previous dues structure represented a barrier to joining B'nai Sholom," says Barbara. "If you know unaffiliated Jews (singles and families of any age), please mention this new policy to them."

Ben and Becky Marvin Make Substantial Contribution to B'nai Sholom's Endowment Account

As members of B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation for almost thirty years, Becky and Ben Marvin have always been generous to our synagogue. Ben served as a member of the Board for several years as well as temple President; he is still an active member of the Ritual Committee and he provides photography for the Communications Committee. Becky effectively managed the office for many years and now serves as Co-Chair of the busy Social Action Committee. Both valued the opportunities for friendship, camaraderie, and community service that B'nai Sholom provided. They paid their dues, contributed financially what they could, and gave freely of their time and effort.

But both Becky and Ben wanted to do more - something substantial that might help ensure B'nai Sholom's existence for the next generation of Jews. As they settled into retirement, they reviewed their finances and realized that some of their investments had done particularly well. The means to make that substantial contribution became apparent. With the assistance of their financial advisor, they were able to transfer stock of a very significant value to the temple's endowment account at the end of 2017.

With this remarkable gift, Becky and Ben have initiated the launch of our BSRC Legacy Campaign. For years, our synagogue leaders have discussed the need to expand our endowment, funded in the past by a few generous donors, to safeguard our financial future. Having a healthy endowment would result in a consistent income stream that could defray operating expenses and expand programming, making membership more affordable, accessible, and valuable.

Economists tell us that the Jewish community is collectively the wealthiest it has ever been. Many if not all of us have savings, IRAs, investments, insurance policies, and property which will be transferred to our next generation. Why not put B'nai Sholom on your list of recipients? By including B'nai Sholom in your legacy planning, you will be transferring not only financial wealth but Jewish heritage to your descendants. Ben and Becky Marvin hope that you will join them in making a legacy contribution that will secure the existence of the warm, inclusive temple that they call their spiritual home.

A member of the BSRC Legacy Campaign team will be approaching you over the next several months to give you a similar opportunity to establish a legacy plan. If you want to get involved, please email mbrucemd53@gmail.com. We look forward to a successful collaboration.

Pictures from Purim Celebration





An Evening to Remember

Fifty-eight celebrants gathered on Purim for what may have been our best potluck ever. A variety of delicacies graced the table, celebrities were on hand to read the Megillah, and we were treated to semi-original songs such as “I’ve Looked at Jews from Both Sides Now.” Poetry, political satire and whimsy were the price of admission. Many thanks to Lori Stuart, Deb Adler, Stephen Abelman, and David DiPaola for assisting with set up and to the many hands who were on deck to clean up. The Ritual Committee is looking for a creative group to brainstorm ideas for the program for next Purim. Anyone interested should contact Melissa Putterman Hoffmann.

Saturday March 10, 2018 was an exciting night at B’nai Sholom.



Scores of congregants came out to support the 2018 biennial Goods & Services Auction on Saturday March 10th. The evening was full of fun, good natured ribbing, and tasty refreshments – all the ingredient that make B’nai Sholom warm and welcoming. Our wonderful auctioneers, Ben Marvin, Maggie Tabak, and Rabbi Don Cashman, kept the night rolling – thank you!

Thanks to the Board of Directors for their outreach, the bounty of goods and services provided by our congregants, impressive business solicitations and generous bidding, we raised **\$8,000** for our congregation.

Attendees were treated to two new pleasures this year. Phil Teumim provided tunes while the evening’s results were tallied and the Social Action Committee provided attendees an opportunity to support Family Promise by enjoying homemade crepes, made and served up by Jeff and Rebecca Klamka.

This event would not be possible without the efforts of the Fundraising Committee:
Christine Blackman, Ellie Davis, Maxine Goldberg, Lois Gordon, Katelyn Ouellette-DiPaola, Barbara Nussbaum, Margie Pass, Sheila Schwartz, and Carol Smith.

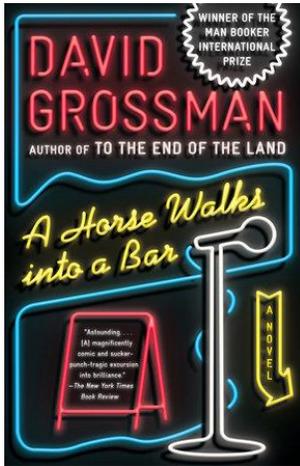
A special thank you to those who provided an extra hand:
Elizabeth Alowitz, Rich Blackman, Isaac Chorost, Randy Davis, Eric Goldberg, Ethan Goldberg, Susan Radosh, and Doug Smith.

New in the library

A Horse Walks into a Bar

by David Grossman

translated from the Hebrew by Jessica Cohen



Yes, it's a book about a stand-up comedian. Yes, the action takes place during one night's routine at a seedy club in Netanya, Israel. Yes, there are jokes. Not, it's not a light and funny novel. If Jews have become known as a people who can make tragedy comic, David Grossman, one of Israel's most acclaimed writers, is going the other way in this book. He's made this comedian tragic. The novel is powerful, heartbreaking, and thought provoking. And some of the jokes will make you smile.

Note: The BSRC library also has a copy of Grossman's *To the End of the Land*.

College Mishloach Manot Project

By Liz Davis

College has its ups and downs, and with my first kid off at her first year, I was acutely aware of the latter. So when Chabad sent me a mailer, asking if I'd like to purchase a Purim care package, I was tempted, but I had some reservations. I brought the matter up to Rabbi Cashman, asking if it would be better to create my own gift basket. He reminded me that the congregation used to send out similar packages, although it hadn't in a few years. He would get the names and addresses and even provide boxes if I would coordinate the contents.

The race was on – we were only two and a half weeks out from Purim. Fortunately, B'nai Sholom is the kind of place where help is readily available for a project like this:

- First off: kids. The Rabbi put out an immediate call to all parents of kids potentially in that age group, and got names and addresses for 15 of our 20 potential kids.
- Next up: goodies. I'm not a big baker and the thought of making – and potentially ruining – several dozen hamentaschen frankly alarmed me most of all. But Maxine Goldberg and the rest of the Fundraising Committee scrambled and found us enough for our 15 kids. The internet provided groggers, masks, Israeli candy and cute gift cards.
- Finally: packing and delivery. Christine printed up mailing labels and set us up in the social hall with packing materials. Stacey Wager Pacuk, Sandy Rosner and Jody Shlomo helped assemble beautiful gift boxes, and Julie Novkov delivered them to the post office.

Oh, and the response? I can only speak for my daughter, who texted me immediately when she got it, to say, "This is some good" – ahem, let's just say – "stuff!"

The following Yahrtszeits will be observed in April.

4/6 Sara Steinhart; Lillian Gaes Schwadron*; Michael DeFronzo; Caleb Reeder; Milton Farkas; Morris Weiss; Rebecca Miller Shultz; Simon Finkelman; Muriel Cohen*

4/13 Dorothy Hess*; Hazel Propp Sohmer; Fanny Engler*; Jacob Hammer*; Sheldon Bosin; Mota Teumim; Rachel Abrams*; Goldie Goldstein; David Fiks; Larry Propp; Edward Blumenthal; Anna Raderman

4/20 J. Milton Steinhart*; Judy Reeder; Rhoda Green; Sara Rocovitz Propp*; Manuel Aronson*; Anne Smuckler Paktor; Betty Alschuler Gottlieb; Sidney Devore; William Lacov; Aaron Harold Rosner; Bernard Earl Shanks

4/27 Lena Wolf*; Evelyn Davis; Lieselotte Weiner; Cecelia Zimmerman*; Sophie Goldstein*; Gertrude Sperber*

**denotes that a Perpetual Memorial has been established.*

Thank you!

to the following congregants who recently hosted an Oneg Shabbat: Brenda Hazard and Steve Morse and Martie and Phil Teumim.

to the Bulletin Brigade who helped fold, insert and stuff envelopes to get the March bulletin out: Joan Savitt, Steve Ableman, Rema Goldstein, Mark and Cheryl Reeder and Anne Hausgaard.

THE CONGREGATION NOTES WITH THANKS THESE CONTRIBUTIONS...

You can contribute online at: <http://www.bnaisholom.albany.ny.us/donations>

General Fund

In memory of **Richard and Paul Rosenthal** by Mari Vosburgh

In memory of **Lazar Kleinfeld and Sylvia Lande** by the Stoller Family

In honor of **Sharona Wachs's 60th Birthday** by Deb Adler

In memory of **Dr. Helen Rehr, Adult Education Committee** by Judy and Roy Fruiterman

RABBI: Donald P. Cashman
PRESIDENT: Elizabeth Liebschutz
OFFICE MANAGER: Christine Blackman
BOOKKEEPER: Lisa Allendorph
OFFICE HOURS: MON/WED/THURS/FRI 9:30 AM–3:30 PM

As a rule, the **BULLETIN DEADLINE** is the second Wednesday of each month. With so much information to report, adherence to the deadline is critical to ensuring the bulletin is sent out in a timely manner.

Period Covered	Deadline
May.....	April 11
June.....	May 9

Articles and news received after deadline are subject to omission.