

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

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DECEMBER 2016

KISLEV/TEVET 5777

JOIN US FOR THESE SERVICES AND STUDY SESSIONS

Friday, December 2	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE - Tefillat Talmidim Shabbat Dinner (Potluck)	6:00 PM 7:00 PM
Saturday, December 3	Extended Study - The Writings (Concluding Proverbs)	9:30 AM
Friday, December 9	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Saturday, December 10	TORAH STUDY: <i>Va-yetse'</i> Gen. 28.10-32.3	
Friday, December 16	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE Synagogue Scholar Series Elizabeth Greenberg: "Jews in the Garment District"	8:00 PM
Saturday, December 17	TORAH STUDY: <i>Va-yishlah</i> Gen. 32.4-36.43	
Friday, December 23	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Saturday, December 24	TORAH STUDY: <i>Va-yeshev</i> Gen. 37.1-40.23	
Friday, December 30	EREV SHABBAT HANUKKAH SERVICE - Bring Menorah and Candles	8:00 PM
Saturday, December 31	TORAH STUDY: <i>Mikkets</i> Gen. 41.1-44.17	
Friday, January 6	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	6:00 PM
Saturday, January 7	Extended Study - The Writings (Job)	9:30 AM

B'nai Sholom invites YOU to a Potluck Dinner Friday, December 2 at 7 PM
Immediately following Shabbat Service. Bring your appetites and your
favorite dish to share.

RSVP to Mark Silverbush msilver6@nycap.rr.com
Coordinated by the Religious School Committee



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...

Post-Election models for comfort

Mercifully, the campaign season is over. For many of us, I know, the fear and uncertainty of what lies ahead may well be worse than the campaign, which was characterized by the Central Conference of American Rabbis as “filled with overt racism, misogyny, xenophobia, Islamophobia, anti-Semitism, and anti-LGBT sentiments. The President-elect and his Vice President-elect have fostered many of these in their election rhetoric.” The President-elect has expressed support for positions that are in opposition to those espoused by Judaism as we understand it, and Reform Judaism’s resolutions and policies.

Synagogues and churches in the United States, as tax-exempt institutions, may not endorse candidates or parties. We may endorse and advocate for legislation, and we may discuss candidates’ and elected officials’ positions on issues, and how they line up with our organizational or movement positions. I try to avoid praising one candidate over another prior to an election while speaking from the bima. In 1992 I was rather explicit about the Jewish values that were important in assessing a candidate, in reaction to discourse at that time about “family values.” My position is essentially that I do not know which candidate God favors; I only know what Jewish text, tradition and history teaches.

Torah is often used by our sages to talk about their own times. The best and most well-known example of this would be the Passover Haggadah, which purports to tell the story of the Oppression in Egypt, but if we go digging, we see they are talking also about Roman oppression, the contemporary problem facing the rabbis in the first centuries CE. We turn to Torah to help us understand our own times: how we might feel, how we might act, how we can understand that which is happening. There’s a whole collection of Jewish paradigms that may help us cope in the weeks leading up to the inauguration, and in the months that follow.

If you went to bed before 2:30 am, Wednesday morning you woke up to the news that said, contrary to all those polls, that our former senator had lost the election. Reading the news, following the social media, the dominant feeling was one of surprise, shock, and death. I thought of Aaron, the High Priest, who was confronted by the death of his two sons Nadav and Avihu. His reaction in the Torah: וידם אהרן “Aaron was silent.” Sometimes, the only reaction is to be struck mute.

After death, of course, comes mourning, and it sounded like people needed to sit shiva. The model of shiva is good: we cocoon, we feel really miserable for a few days, then gradually we release ourselves back into normal life, a new normal life, reconciled to our new reality. This is a good model for dealing with anything we consider a setback: grab a hold of yourself, and cope, because most likely it’s not the end of the world.

A few weeks ago we read the story of Noah. When confronted with a pending bad situation, Noah retreated into his little insulated family community, where he hid out till things were better. Were things really better? After the flood, he then got drunk and passed out naked. The model of hiding out and self-anesthetizing are not terribly good models. I think remaining alert in the next couple of years is better idea.

(Continued on next page.)

On Yom Kippur afternoon we read the Book of Jonah as the haftarah. Jonah runs away from the challenge, but eventually has to confront it. We too, have to confront certain challenges, and dealing with the aftermath of an election is one of those challenges. While many have spoken about moving to Canada, I doubt that all that many will actually flee to Tarshish, as it were. Going directly to Nineveh and speaking truth to power is, after all, what he ended up doing, and it worked.

At the election, the pending portion was the story of Avram and Sarai's call to go from Haran. They set out not knowing where they were headed, but instead needed to trust in God's promise of protection. It's rough for them: Canaan, famine, Egypt, Lot, infertility, but they end up on their feet. Considering we're still here some 3500 years later, that inspires confidence that whatever we may encounter, we shall survive.

As commentary on the Torah text, we have the rabbinic Midrash of Nahshon ben Amminadav. The Egyptian Army is in pursuit of the Israelites, who find themselves at the shore of the sea. Nahshon enters the water first, and only when it comes up to his neck does the sea split. Nahshon is a model courage, showing us that we need to do what must be done, even if it seems risky.

The book of Ecclesiastes, also known as Kohelet, provides much down to earth wisdom. It tells us there a proper time for everything. Thus, sometimes our candidates win, and sometimes our candidates lose. Sometimes we like the government, and sometimes we don't. Based on what I've heard and read from congregants, other Jews, and other rabbis, it's safe to say that most people I know are not happy about the new government. But with the margin separating them 1/10 of 1 %, plenty of other people would not have been happy if it had gone differently. Of course, most of those others aren't using the metric of Jewish values to stake their positions.

But I must tell you that I've worked my way out of shiva. First, many campaign promises don't get kept; they are hyperbole and exaggeration. I could say they are just lying, but that's lashon hara. Second, the orderly transfer of power has begun. There is a reassurance of normalcy. Third, people will be vigilant about hard-won liberties and rights. Yes, it is true that a single party will have control over all three branches of government, and this is worrisome, but there's almost always a backlash two years later.

The words of Rabbi Nahman of Bratslav have been in my mind: "All the world is a narrow bridge, and the essential piece is not to be afraid." I am hoping to overcome my post-election fears.

Let there be no mistake: one should never be complacent about the government. Think of the model of Nathan the prophet, who castigated David for his immoral actions in securing Bathsheba. Based on what we've heard, we know we must keep our eyes open, and be true to the values we treasure. The glass in our synagogues and mosques, our stores and offices, has not been shattered. Still, the verbiage we have heard over the last few months scares us. We pray for calm, we pray for peace, we pray for justice.

Rabbi Don Cashman

YOBS Hanukah Party



There will be latkes, sufganiot, a dreidel tournament, and a whole lot of fun! The whole congregation, especially all youth (high school and younger) of the temple and their families, are invited!

Bring latkes if you want to participate in our competition for best latkes!

Sunday December 18, 2016 | 3:30-5:30 PM at B'nai Sholom

Prices are \$5 for Adults | \$2 for ages 13-18 | \$1 for ages 12 and under.

Maximum charge per family: \$10

RSVP to YOBS@bnaisholom.albany.ny.us or 482-5283

We look forward to seeing everyone there!

FAMILY PROMISE VOLUNTEER TRAINING SET FOR JANUARY 29

Helping homeless families with young children

If you are interested in becoming a volunteer for the B'nai Sholom initiative with Family Promise please contact our coordinator, Gail Volk

gailvolk@aol.com

What do B'nai Sholom volunteers do?

As a support congregation we have pledged to provide dinner and companionship from 5:00 to 9:00 pm for two nights each of the four weeks that Delmar Presbyterian Church is the host site. Depending on how many families are being served, two to three B'nai Sholom volunteers will be needed each night. Volunteers cook and transport dinner to the church, share dinner with guests, clean up, and then are available to read to children, provide homework assistance or have a companionable conversation. Volunteers will be trained and **ALL** members of a family are welcome to volunteer!



SAVE THE DATE

B'nai Sholom's Chilipalooza

Saturday February 4, 2017 6-9 pm

Watch for full details in the January Bulletin!

Siena's Jimmy Patsos and Brett Bisping Visit B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation



On Sunday, October 30, B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation welcomed both Siena Head Coach Jimmy Patsos and Saints senior forward Brett Bisping for their first-ever "Bagels and Basketball." The free event allowed the synagogue to open its doors to the public.

Patsos, now entering his 4th season at Siena, is one most intriguing coaches in the country and he didn't disappoint. The Boston native had the crowd of about 40 people entertained throughout. "Red Auerbach was a good friend and I coached at Maryland for 13 seasons, Shanah Tovah everyone", said Patsos as he kicked off the roughly 1 hour Q&A session with the crowd.

Brian Sinkoff, a member of B'nai Sholom's Board of Trustees, served as the event's emcee.

Patsos, who took over a struggling Loyola program back in 2004, got some great career advice from Auerbach – the former Boston Celtics General Manager and member of the National Jewish Sports Hall of Fame. "Loyola was 1-27 the year before I took over", Patsos recalled. "Red told me to take the job – even I couldn't do much worse."

After 9 seasons with the Greyhounds, Patsos took the Siena gig back in April 2013. "This is my 4th year here. Siena is a great job – the best in the MAAC. We've got a great arena (the Times Union Center). I feel like this team is going to be one of the best we've had here."

Bisping added, "The target is now on our backs. We've got all 5 starters back and some added depth on the bench. We're not going to sneak up on anyone this year. I want to play in an NCAA Tournament. That's the dream of any college player and this is my last year to do it."

Siena was picked 2nd behind Monmouth in the MAAC pre-season polls. "The pre-season polls are nice but let's see where we are in March." Patsos said. "The MAAC is a league where our Tournament is when you want to be playing the best basketball. We're an above-the-rim league. There are lots of athletes in this league."



For the first time in the history of the Albany Cup, the annual game against crosstown rival UAlbany will be played at the SEFCU Arena – the Great Danes' home court. "The game against UAlbany has to be played every year. It will be a great atmosphere. That game is great for the community", Patsos said. Bisping agreed, "I want to beat UAlbany on their home court. It should be fun." The series will return to the Times Union next season.

(Continued on next page.)

B'nai Sholom plans on having other "Bagels and Basketball" events in the future. "We hope to do this several times a year. I think it's great for our congregation and the community to get to see their local sports celebrities up close and personal," said Sinkoff.

B'nai Sholom Joins with Delmar Presbyterian on Election Night to Pray for "National Healing"

Rabbi Cashman and Delmar Presbyterian Reverend Karen Pollan conducted an interfaith service for national healing on Election Night, November 8, just as the polls were closing and before the returns began to come in. About 30 people – members of each congregation, together with guests, friends, and community members who had heard about the event – attended the service, held at the church in Delmar. The two spiritual leaders wrote and alternately led portions of the service, which consisted primarily of songs, psalms, and prayers for peace, mutual understanding, and reconciliation.

One of the reasons Reverend Pollan, who had the initial idea for the service, contacted B'nai Sholom was because we partner with that church in providing meals and accommodations for homeless families through the Family Promise social action project. As a consequence, many of the attendees from the two congregations had met each other while volunteering through Family Promise. And, the service was a perfect fit for the Hazard-Morse family to pray with Brenda's mother, a Delmar Presbyterian member.

B'nai Sholom members who attended reacted positively to both the idea and the way it was executed. Mark Silverbush praised the way the service was conducted "in a very inclusive way without being overly dogmatic or political." Says Paula Philo, "Hopefully, services similar to this one were held all over the country. I felt at peace joining with members of B'nai Sholom and the Delmar Presbyterian Church in prayer, I felt that we were two different groups finding common ground and hoping the two different factions in our country could be resolved." Becky Marvin notes that she sat through the entire service assuming that Hilary Clinton would win, but praying for Clinton to reach out to others. She notes that the service reminded her "to reach out to those whose opinions differ from mine."

Attendees noted how much better they felt afterwards, and particularly cited an improved ability to cope with the rest of the evening and the election results. Said Gail Volk, "I loved the service. It was an opportunity to be in a safe environment that allowed me to feel my own feelings while joining in a community healing. It helped me to brace myself for an outcome I could not stand to contemplate prior to that. It helped me to know others were having their own struggles -- whatever they were -- and also needed to be there. It helped to understand that we are one community, one nation, no matter what the outcome was." Stella Suib notes, "It was a much needed piece of community and humanity that seemed to have been crushed by the hateful and way-too-long election season. It was the most peaceful I had felt in weeks."

A Good Day at the Judaica Sale and Fair Trade Market!



Sunday, November 13 was a full day at B'nai Sholom. Through the efforts of the Fundraising Committee, B'nai Sholom hosted our first Fair Trade Market. Eight different vendors came to display and sell their merchandise. They are all part of the movement to support Fair Trade and are selling merchandise from up to 30 different countries.

In addition to the Fair Trade Market, we had Eeema's Beads (jewelry by Sharona Wachs) and the annual Judaica Sale along with a Bake Sale. Through the efforts of Sheila Schwartz, we were scheduled to have a blood drive. This, unfortunately, had to be canceled because of some problems on the Red Cross' computers.

The Judaica and Bake Sale and the Fair Trade Market began at 10 AM on Sunday. But, for about two hours before this, the synagogue was a bustle of activity as the vendors and the Fundraising Committee set up for their sales. The atmosphere in the synagogue was positive, energetic and wonderful. We had a great turnout – thanks to all for coming – and sales were very good. As is B'nai Sholom's style, this turned into a warm and welcoming event as many non-members came through our doors to peruse the merchandise and many members re-connected with other members that they hadn't seen in a while.

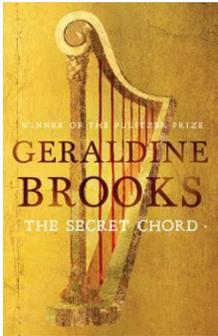


We – the Fundraising Committee – are grateful for the support of our synagogue leadership and very grateful to our membership for supporting this sale. The sales hinged on a good turnout and by all accounts, we had good turnout and good sales! We are currently surveying the vendors for feedback and hope – very much – to host a fair trade market again next year. Thanks so much to all for supporting fair trade and supporting our synagogue. This was a good day!

(More pictures on the following page.)



New in the library –
The Secret Chord by Geraldine Brooks,
Penguin, 2015



The Secret Chord is more than an excellent book by a popular author. (Brooks has also written *People of the Book*, *Year of Wonders* and *March*.) It's the book that congregant and synagogue scholar Martha Rozett will be talking about at services on January 27. If you've never attended B'nai Sholom's annual version of a book group, this would be a great year to start. The novel is about King David, one of Judaism's most important historical figures, and at 352 pages, can be easily read by the end of January. It's not required to read the book ahead of time, but you'll enjoy the discussion more if you have.

Did you know? Martha has been leading our book discussion for at least 13 years. Previous titles are all part of the library's collection. In approximate chronological order, they are *Enemies: A Love Story* by I.B. Singer, *Journey to the End of the Millennium* by A. B. Yehoshua, *When I Lived in Modern Times* by Linda Grant, *Rashi's Daughters Book I* by Maggie Anton, *Joy Comes in the Morning* by Jonathan Rosen, *The Zookeeper's Wife* by Diane Ackerman, *A Pigeon and a Boy* by Meir Shalev, *Jews Without Money* by Michael Gold, *Day into Night* by Anita Diamant, *The Man in the White Sharkskin Suit* by Lucette Lagnado, *Nemesis* by Philip Roth, *The World to Come* by Dara Horn, and *Days of Awe* by Achy Obejas.

(Continued on the next page.)

Note: There are no official return dates on B'nai Sholom library books, but please try to return popular books like this one in a month or less. Thanks!

Want to own *The Secret Chord* instead? Buy a copy at Book House of Stuyvesant Plaza, tell them it's for the B'nai Sholom book club, and you'll receive 20% off.

B'Yachad News

The Shabbat potluck scheduled for December 2, at 7:00 PM will be coordinated by the B'nai Sholom Religious School Committee, which is a small but dedicated group of B'nai Sholom members. Please contact Mark Silverbush at msilver6@nycap.rr.com who is coordinating the potluck.

B'Yachad is well underway this school year under the leadership of Rabbi Miriam, as she and the Board are working to fine-tune various aspects of the program and revising policies and by-laws. The B'Yachad Board of Education, which has three members from each participating synagogue, meets on the first Thursday of every month at Ohav Shalom and parents are welcome to attend. Julie Novkov-Bloom, Ann Shapiro and Julie Friedman sit on the B'Yachad board and Ann is the liaison to the B'nai Sholom Board. Pam Strassberg assists with information for the newsletters.

On November 13, B'Yachad faculty attended an Educator's Workshop which parents were welcome to attend. Beginning November 16, Wednesday classes included an option for students to be able to engage in either an arts and crafts or movement based activity for the first one-half hour.

The B'Yachad Family Shabbat dinner, that was on the calendar for Friday, November 18 is being rescheduled. Once a new date is chosen, parents will be invited and the school calendar will be updated.

The rabbis from all three congregations remain actively involved in B'Yachad programming. On Sunday, November 20, Grade 5 Family Education met with Rabbi Cashman.

B'nai Sholom 2017 Summer Campership/ Israel Trip Scholarships

Scholarship forms for camp and Israel trips for the summer of 2017 are now available for pick-up at the B'nai Sholom office. You will find them on the table by the main offices. The form is also available at <http://www.bnaisholom.albany.ny.us/scholarship-application-form>. Submission deadline is January 31.



The following Yahrtszeits will be observed in December.

- 12/2 Murray Berg; Richard L. Brower*; B. Paul Blum; David Cohen*; Barbara Markstein Peckerman*; David Gottlieb; Jack Pendergrass; Wanda Rockefeller; Jacob Lichtenfels*; Seymour Schwartzman*; Abraham Cogen
- 12/9 Albert J. Abrams*; Ben Dietchman; Rita Binenkorb Ray; Sadie Cohen*; Hannah R. Jaffe*; Marvin Millens; Erwin Winston*; Freda Kussack; Jacob Lazoroff*; Albert Marcus*; Sylvia Goldstein Marcus*
- 12/16 Ruth Aronson*; Harry Cohen*; Estera Fiks; Adah Vosburgh; Norma Belle Singer Beatman*; Samuel Link; Saul Mouchly Small; Hannah Tabak; Adele Broch Krochmal
- 12/23 Cornelius Epstein*; Waldamar Knieling; Florence Morse; Judith S. Dobris*; Anita Dubb*; Rick Friedman; Sanford Liebschutz
- 12/30 Ralph Pogoda; Arnold Rosenberg*; Morris Adler*; Mildred Adler*; Olaf "Sonny" Hausgaard; Lore Lee; Rachel Trombley Porter; Benjamin Sacks; Irving Goodman*; Gerald Nathan; Gerald Davis; Michael Leon Kramer*; Jean Pacuk; Vera Winston Propp*; Gertrude Slotnick

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

THANK YOU

to the following congregants who recently hosted an Oneg Shabbat: Kevin and Lisa Chorost, Harvey and Marcia Tress, Valerie Tabak and Jesse Dinkin and Ron and Terry Royne.

to the Bulletin Brigade who helped fold, insert and stuff envelopes to get the November bulletin out: Joan Savitt, Mark and Cheryl Reeder and Marilyn and Richard Strassberg.

2017 Entertainment Books are now on sale
for a cost of \$25. They are available
during office hours .

THE CONGREGATION NOTES WITH THANKS THESE CONTRIBUTIONS...

General Fund

In memory of **Michael Kramer and Seymour Schwartzman** by Mindy Kramer.

In memory of **Judith S. Dobris** by Jan Dobris and Family.

In appreciation for **being able to attend B'nai Sholom's Mincha and Ne'ilah services on Yom Kippur** by Mark and Melanie Harris.

In appreciation for **being able to attend Rosh Hashanah services** by Anne Scher.

Thank you for **being able to attend High Holy Days services at B'nai Sholom** by Michael and Ann Sail.

Thank you for **welcoming us on Rosh Hashanah** by Tina Lincer and Ron Levine.

In appreciation for **allowing us to celebrate Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur at B'nai Sholom** by Edmund and Jacqueline Gutierrez.

In appreciation for **guest tickets for the Days of Awe** by Ian Duckor.

In appreciation for **guest tickets for the Days of Awe** by Michael and Barbara Weiler

In appreciation for **guest tickets for the Days of Awe** by Roy and Judy Fruiterman.

In appreciation for **guest tickets for the Days of Awe** by Mark and Cheryl Reeder.

In appreciation for **guest tickets for the Days of Awe** by Jodie and Brett Orzechowski.

In appreciation for **guest tickets for the Days of Awe** by Steven Lustig.

In appreciation for **guest tickets for the Days of Awe** by Jerry and Roberta Minzer.

In appreciation for **guest tickets for the Days of Awe** by Marilyn Bochner.

In appreciation for **guest tickets for the Days of Awe** by Judith Sagor.

In appreciation for **guest tickets for the Days of Awe** by Harriet Jacob.

In appreciation for **guest tickets for the Days of Awe** by Mark and Melanie Harris.

In appreciation for **guest tickets for the Days of Awe** by Howard, Marion and Nicole Madlin.

In appreciation for **a guest ticket for the Days of Awe** by Marilyn Lowenheim.

In appreciation for **a guest ticket for the Days of Awe** by Susan Sirota.

In appreciation for **a guest ticket for the Days of Awe** by Hedy Lowenheim.

In appreciation for **a guest ticket for the Days of Awe** by Alyssa Talanker.

In appreciation for **a guest ticket for the Days of Awe** by David Kessler.

Social Action Fund

In honor of **the marriage of Lucy Reeder to Doug Newton** by Gail and Larry Volk.

In honor of **the marriage of Mark Rosenthal to Elizabeth Boos** by Gail and Larry Volk.

In honor of **the marriage of Alex Reeder to Julia Hyman** by Gail and Larry Volk.

Marlene Baker Scholarship Fund

In honor of **the marriage of Mark Rosenthal to Elizabeth Boos** by Marlene Glass.

In honor of **the marriage of Alex Reeder to Julia Hyman** by Marlene Glass.

In honor of **the marriage of Casey Dinkin to Davy Woodland** by Marlene Glass.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In appreciation for **Rabbi Cashman for finding us the best path to Israel** by Bruce and Edith Goldstein.

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

IT'S SNOWING—ARE WE OPEN? Check the telephone message on the BSRC answering machine for up-to-date information about cancellations. We will also try to post cancellations on our web site. You may also subscribe to cancellation e-mails on our website.



Life is filled with challenges. JFS can help.

- Counseling for anxiety, depression or grief
- Home visits, assessments and advocacy for seniors
- Support through terminal illness or trauma
- Transportation for Jewish seniors

Please call us to learn more: 518-482-8856 | jfsneny.org  Jewish FAMILY Services
Supported by the Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York

RABBI: Donald P. Cashman
PRESIDENT: Elizabeth Liebschutz
OFFICE MANAGER: Christine Blackman
BOOKKEEPER: Lisa Allendorph
OFFICE HOURS: MON/WED/THURS/FRI 9:30 AM–2:30 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
January.....	December 14
February.....	January 11

Articles and news received after deadline are subject to omission.