

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

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JULY 2017

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TAMMUZ/AV 5777

JOIN US FOR THESE SERVICES AND STUDY SESSIONS

Friday, July 7	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	6:00 PM
Saturday, July 8	EXTENDED STUDY: The Writings (Job)	9:30 AM
Friday, July 14	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Saturday, July 15	TORAH STUDY: <i>Pinhas</i> Num. 25.10-30.10	9:30 AM
Friday, July 21	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Saturday, July 22	TORAH STUDY: <i>Mattot-Mase'ei</i> Num. 30.2-36.13	9:30 AM
Friday, July 28	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Saturday, July 29	TORAH STUDY: <i>Devarim</i> Deut. 1.1-3.22	9:30 AM
Friday, August 4	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	6:00 PM
Saturday, August 5	EXTENDED STUDY: The Writings (Song of Songs)	9:30 AM

Are you "In the Blue?"

Have you seen the Days of Awe prayer book graphic outside the sanctuary? Those Mishkan Hanefesh books are being colored blue for every book set that is covered by donations. Names of families who donate are listed as well. To date 26 families have donated money to purchase 117 book sets! While sharing is a positive activity, the goal is to have 200+ book sets, which will enable all participants to have books. Look for the flyer included in the bulletin to see how you can be "In the Blue."

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...

Early in July we shall finish, in our monthly study, the Book of Job. God will appear out of the whirlwind, and make it clear to Job and his “friends” that they understand very little about the way the universe operates. Humans have tried since then to understand more of the secrets of the universe, and while we’ve made great strides, there is still so much unknown. We know that as time goes on we will discover more about the skies, the seas, the human mind, the cell, the natural world, and virtually every aspect of existence. We can only hope that our society continues to value –and to fund – such inquiries.

In August, we shall move into the Five Megillot: Song of Songs, Ruth, Lamentations, Ecclesiastes, and Esther, which shall occupy us for eight or nine months.

When we refer to “the megillah” we are usually talking about Esther, which contains the story and the instructions to observe the festival of Purim. Early on, it became customary to read the book of Lamentations on Tish’a B’Av, since that book appears to be eye-witness reflections on the misery following the destruction of Solomon’s Temple in 586 BCE, an event commemorated on Tish’a B’Av each summer. Indeed, this book pre-dates Esther and was probably read before Esther became entrenched in the liturgy.

The remaining three megillot seem more forced into place. Individual books were usually written on separate scrolls (megillot), and these five books stand out as different from most other biblical books: they are not wilderness narratives such as the Torah, nor Prophetic utterances, nor tales of conquest and kings (Joshua, Judges, Samuel, Kings, Chronicles, Daniel, Ezra, Nehemiah). Just as the Torah is five books, earlier editors divided the 150 Psalms internally into five sections; these five megillot were seen as a parallel as well, so the rabbis reached – sometime a far reach – to find connections with a remaining book and a holiday. The Book of Ruth is set at the season of the barley harvest, so they linked it to Shavuot. Moreover, her acceptance of Torah (“your people shall be my people, and your God my God”) cements that link.

Our sages created a link from King Solomon to Song of Songs, Proverbs, and Ecclesiastes. They said he wrote the former in his youth, the middle in middle age when he was wise, and the latter when he was old and cynical. Song of Songs, a piece of ancient Israelite erotic poetry, they used to create an imagery of the love between God and the Israelite people. This they linked to Passover, when the loving God takes Israel out of bondage. It is therefore traditional to read Song of Songs on the Shabbat during Passover. The rabbis, of course, didn’t want anyone to take the book literally.

Ecclesiastes is cynical, even bitter: You live, you die, all is futile! There’s a time for everything – it all happens, and it all happened before, because there’s nothing new under the sun. This book presents a challenge to the naïve religious mind, and requires us to appreciate the ups and downs of life, which the author presumably had experienced. The rabbis stuffed this book into the Shabbat of Sukkot, which is at the end of the year, when the crops have given their yield and the plants are about to die before the cold winter sets in.

I invite everyone to join us on (usually, but watch the calendar and announcements) the first Saturday morning of the month when we meet at 9:30 for breakfast and study from 10 to noon. No fee, no registration, and guests are always welcomed. We have plenty of Bibles.

Yours for a fulfilling and safe summer,

Rabbi Don Cashman

Take a Piece of History Home

Now that the congregation is updating our Days of Awe services with new Mishkan Hanefesh prayer books, we are offering Gates of Awe books on a first-come, first-served basis, free to B'nai Sholom members. The books are in good shape, and contain the complete Rosh Hashanah and Yom Kippur services, in a gender-sensitive edition. We hope you will take a look for books you may have donated, and re-adopt them. Or take books that have no bookplates. They will be on tables in the hallway outside the sanctuary during synagogue business hours and services. Please let your friends know.

Would you be interested in hosting a *Rosh Hashanah Luncheon?*

Thursday, September 21, 2017



We provide invitations, stamps and assistance coordinating this POTLUCK event. Please contact Hana Sullenger for more details. hszima@yahoo.com or 542-7863

B'nai Sholom Rosh Hashanah Luncheons are a longstanding tradition that have been enjoyed by our members and guests for many years. It is a wonderful way to visit with other congregants, reconnect with old friends and make new connections.

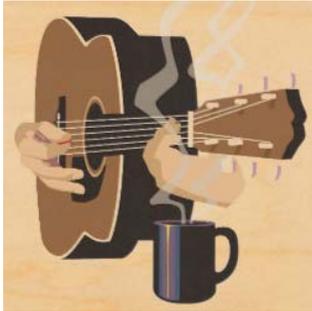
Save the Date

FOR BOB DYLAN AT B'NAI SHOLOM (in a manner of speaking)

On **October 21, 2017**, B'nai Sholom is hosting a very special two-part musical program. The first half features "**The Kabbalah of Bob Dylan**", a presentation by Seth Rogovoy, called "**American Jewry's Greatest Dylan Scholar**" and known to many of you for his weekly cultural commentaries on WAMC. Seth will offer a multi-media treatment tracing the Jewish roots in Dylan's music and drawing from his book "Bob Dylan: Prophet Mystic Poet." And get ready for this - after the break we will be treated to a selection of several of Dylan's Jewish influenced songs played by our own house band including long-time folkies Phil Teumim and Rabbi Don Cashman.

This is a don't miss Saturday night. More information to follow.

B'nai Sholom Coffeehouse -- A Great Night of Entertainment!



It was another fun night at the Bet Kafeh, the B'nai Sholom coffeehouse, back in early May. These evenings have a wonderful feel to them. They are warm, funny, touching, thoughtful and entertaining.

Some of the performers this evening included Max Suib and his band, Perfect Score. They played a short set of originals and a cover. They have a great sound and we were lucky to be able to see them in a small venue like the coffeehouse. We were also treated to one funny story by David Liebschutz and one touching story by Sandy Schuman. Aaron Davis once again treated us to a few songs on the piano. This time he played some Bruce Springsteen and that was a real treat. Jamie Vail rapped, Terry Royne recited some poetry and Joel Bloom made a cameo appearance. Rabbi Cashman stopped in and played a few songs, showing his eclectic style by picking songs of very different genres. Weaving through all of this were our three hosts, Phil Teumim, Will Vail and Jeff Klamka. Listening to them sing and play the guitar or banjo....so great. We need a full length concert from them!

Thanks to all of the performers for the evening and to our hosts Phil, Will and Jeff.

Thanks also go to Ellie and Randy Davis, Doug Smith and Lois Gordon for helping behind the scenes. They helped set up the social hall and then cleaned up afterwards.

Helping with the coffeehouse is truly a labor of love. These evenings are special.

Longevity Dinner and Shabbat



The Longevity Dinner and Shabbat, held on May 19th and sponsored by the Member Events Committee, was a great success. We had an excellent turnout of over 50 long-term congregants, and a varied and delicious selection of foods. Our committee had questionnaires on each table, designed to stimulate conversation about people's experiences with B'nai Sholom and to help us become better acquainted. The post-dinner discussion was both lively and funny, capped off by the distribution of gift bags consisting of Lindt chocolate truffles and inscribed pens.

The rabbi's sermon enhanced the overall experience and was followed by a delicious oneg. We look forward to next spring's Volunteer Dinner and Shabbat, and the next Longevity Dinner and Shabbat, which will be held in May 2019.

Photograph from High School Graduation Shabbat on June 9



L-R Rabbi Cashman, Asher Novkov-Bloom, Phoebe Morse, Benjamin Pacuk, Sarah Davis and Abby Kaplan

Let Your Voice Be Heard

Social Action project: Advocacy in Action

Every month the Social Action Committee is highlighting issues and legislation which have an impact on our local communities, our state and our country. We will also provide information about groups and individuals working on these issues. If you have a strong opinion, we encourage you to get involved, to contact your government representatives and make your voice heard.

NYS Educational Tax Credit

As of this writing, (June 9) the educational tax credit bills have not been brought to the floor of the New York Assembly or Senate. It is unlikely that the Assembly bill, A5862, will come up for a vote in the latter part of June although the companion Senate bill, S04366, might. If they do not receive action before the legislature breaks in late June, they will be taken up when the legislature reconvenes in January. It is important to let your State Senator and your Assemblyperson know your opinion. You can find their contact info on their web pages.

The Union for Reform Judaism and the Central Conference of American Rabbis are advocates for keeping robust, well-funded public education as the norm for our country. The Educational Tax Credit bills currently proposed for NYS will negatively impact public education and blur the lines between separation of church and state. They also hold a higher benefit for upper income residents with less benefit for lower income residents. Below are excerpts from the memo that Reform Jewish Voice of NYS distributed to legislators on Albany Advocacy Day last month. Both Rabbi Cashman and Gail Volk attended.

Study and education is of crucial importance to the Jewish people. As Reform Jews and as Americans, we believe that the strength of our Nation's society lies in our diversity – people from

(Continued on next page.)

different backgrounds, religions, cultures and ethnicities forming a community of shared values, ethical principles, sensitivity to the rights of others – especially the minorities and the marginalized, mutual trust, an appreciation of our differences and acceptance of mutual responsibility for each other’s welfare. These tenets are best learned in our public schools and then reinforced in our workplaces and neighborhoods.

The URJ has continually recognized the importance of public education to American Jews and to all people generally. “Historically, the public schools have been the ladder that American Jews, and so many others, used to climb from poverty to affluence in American life. Open and non-discriminatory in their acceptance of students, public schools are a significant unifying factor among the diverse range of ethnic and religious communities in our society. Private, including religious, schools that will benefit from taxpayer funds under policies such as this proposed tax credit are not bound by those same acceptance standards that are a source of strength in our public school system and society.

The Union for Reform Judaism opposes all attempts to channel public funds to private and parochial schools. In a 1961 resolution, the Union stated that “The devotion of our Union to the separation of religion and state, and our equally deep commitment to public education as a cornerstone of the American democratic process, impel us at this 46th Biennial assembly to reaffirm our opposition to any form of governmental aid to elementary and secondary schools under the supervision or control of any religious denomination or sect — Catholic, Protestant or Jewish.” In 1972 the Reform Movement passed a resolution opposing “using public funds for nonpublic elementary and secondary schools, believing that such aid would infringe the separation of church and state and have damaging impact on public schools.”

For several years the Governor, legislators and private and parochial school proponents have advocated for an Education Tax Credit (ETC) for taxpayers, including corporations, who donate to scholarship funds for private or religious schools. The Education Tax Credit would direct public funding to private and parochial schools, posing a threat to the separation of church and state and potentially drawing money away from the public-school system.

Tax credits that direct funding to private, religious schools undermine the separation of church and state and constitute poor public policy. When state funds are used to reward donors of religious school education, they become an indirect government funding of sectarian institutions. Such actions undermine the First Amendment to the U.S. Constitution and violate the New York State Constitution, Article XI Section 3. Not only do these tax credits imperil the separation of church and state, but they also disproportionately benefit wealthy donors. The tax credit would be distributed on a first-come, first-served basis for a short time, giving an advantage to individuals and corporations who have the means to hire tax professionals to help them quickly navigate the process for obtaining the credit. Moreover, the tax credit circumvents limits on charitable deductions and the benefits high-income households can receive for charitable donations that currently exist under state law. This bill would give a 75% tax credit on donations, but only to those taxpayers whose income exceeds \$300,000. For taxpayers whose income falls below that figure, the tax credit is equivalent to 90% of the amount donated (which is capped at \$875,000 per taxpayer).

Another group working on this issue is New York State United Teachers. Go to [NYSUT.org](https://mac.nysut.org) or <https://mac.nysut.org/issues> to find out more.

On the federal level, similar efforts to undermine public education are included in the President’s proposed budget and are strongly supported by Betsy DeVos, Secretary of Education. Please contact your congressperson, Senator Schumer and Senator Gillibrand.

LET YOUR VOICE BE HEARD!

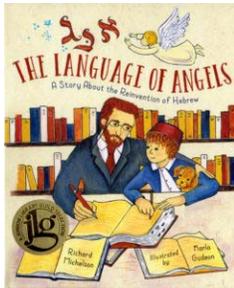
New in the library!

The Language of Angels:

A Story About the Reinvention of Hebrew

Written by Richard Michelson and illustrated by Karla Gudeon

Charlesbridge, 2017



“It isn't easy being the child of a visionary. Ben-Zion's father is Eliezer Ben-Yehuda, a man determined to revive Hebrew as a living, everyday language—even though most of his fellow Jews in 19th-century Jerusalem accuse him of sacrilege and are content speaking Yiddish or the languages of their native lands. Eliezer insists on raising Ben-Zion as the first native speaker of modern Hebrew, which makes for tense family moments and a lonely childhood. But gradually, father and son persuade other children that speaking Hebrew might not be such a bad idea, and that they can have a hand in building the language -word by word...Michelson knows how to turn a complex story into both a brain tickler (how do you invent a word for -ice cream- or -bicycle-?) and a compelling emotional journey. Endnotes provide additional context, including where Michelson's story diverges from the historical record.” *Publishers Weekly*

Note: For adults who want to know more about this fascinating part of Israeli history, see <http://www.myjewishlearning.com/article/eliezer-ben-yehuda/>

The following Yahrtsaits will be observed in July.

- 7/7 Cella Kaufman*; Robert Harris; Lillian Shanks; Eleanor Finklestein; Stanley Samuels; Hyman Moskowitz; Soloman Dachman
- 7/14 Esther Epstein*; Harold Roth*; Morris Bosin; Sonny Brenner; Paul Tafler; Naftali Propp; Leslie Adler; Rosemary Kindlon Roe; Gerda Frankel; Jean Norris Rudman
- 7/21 Rose Lazoroff*; Ellen Rudinger; S Gerald Duckor; Dror Koren; Adele Pastor; Gerald Fruiterman; Barbara Wachs; Barney Ginsburg*; Rudolph Stern*; Edith Eidelman; Eleanor Friedman
- 7/28 Bernice Smith; Benjamin Binewitch; Evelyn Pogoda; Kim Kuang Ho; Helen Pollack Adler; Alex M. Rabineau*; Samuel C. Warshaw*; Rose Gottesman Pollack

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

THE CONGREGATION NOTES WITH THANKS THESE CONTRIBUTIONS...

General Fund

In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Becky and Ben Marvin
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Barney Horowitz
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Jan C. Vosburgh
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Amy R. and Ronald O. Dievendorf
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Roland Guilz
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Bruce and Edith Goldstein
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Judith Glixson
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Paula Philo
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Irving and Marceline Ingber
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Alison R. Pine
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Cornelius D. Murray
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Judy Lee and Bill Herbert
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Jude W. Sagor
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Ruth and Herb Swift
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Harvey and Marcia Tress
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Barbara and Jack Devore
In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by David Troeger
In memory of **Gerry Green** by Eleanor and Randy Davis
In memory of **Earl Marvin** by Becky and Ben Marvin
In memory of **Mildy Fischel** by Cheryl and Mark Reeder
In memory of **Werner P. Frankel** by Herb and Ruth Swift
In memory of **Ernst Swiwcz** by Herb and Ruth Swift
In memory of **Ida Domfort** by Barbara and Jack Devore

Social Action Fund

In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Ann Shapiro and Barry Pendergrass
In memory of **Ida Domfort** by Ann Shapiro and Barry Pendergrass

Circle of Life Fund

In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Randy and Eleanor and Randy Davis

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

thank you!

to the following congregants who recently hosted an Oneg Shabbat: Joel Blumenthal and Dayle Zatlín, Glen and Fran Charles, the Youth Committee, Laura and Aaron Kaplan and Lois Gordon.

to the Bulletin Brigade who helped fold, insert and stuff envelopes to get the June bulletin out: Steve Ableman, Marilyn and Richard Strassberg and Bruce and Edith Goldstein.

Mazal Tov!

- to Eric Devore, son of Jack and Barbara Devore, on his graduation from the SUNY College of Optometry at the end of May.
- to Salome DeGroult-Elias, daughter of Adam Elias and Nathalie DeGroult, on her graduation from Siena College in May.
- to Liz Rosenthal, daughter of Mari Vosburgh and the late Hal Rosenthal, who graduated from Hudson Valley Community College with an Associates Degree With Honors in Environmental Science. Liz was a member of Phi Theta Kappa and was awarded The Stephen L. Hyatt Science Award.
- to Martha Rozett on her retirement from the U at Albany where she was a Professor of English for 44 years.
- to Steve Gottlieb on his retirement from Albany Law School where he taught for 38 years.
- to Ben Marvin on his retirement from the College of St. Rose on June 30.
- to Aiden Morse, son of Steve Morse and Brenda Hazard, on his graduation from SUNY New Paltz.

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
August.....	July 12
September.....	August 9

Articles and news received after deadline are subject to omission.