

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

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JULY 2020

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TAMMUZ/AV 5780

***B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation is a Brit Olam Congregation in covenant with the world
– because we seek the world we want, not the world as it is.***

JOIN US FOR PRAYER, MEDITATION, CELEBRATION AND STUDY

Zoom links are sent out weekly for services.

Please call the office for information about telephone access to the services.

Friday, July 3	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	6:00 PM
Saturday, July 4	TORAH STUDY: <i>Balak</i>	9:30 AM
Friday, July 10	TOT SHABBAT SERVICE	5:30 PM
	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Saturday, July 11	TORAH STUDY: <i>Pinhas</i>	9:30 AM
Friday, July 17	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Saturday, July 18	TORAH STUDY: <i>Mattot-Mase'ei</i>	9:30 AM
Friday, July 24	RABBI'S FAREWELL SHABBAT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Saturday, July 25	TORAH STUDY: <i>Devarim</i>	9:30 AM
Friday, July 31	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Saturday, August 1	TORAH STUDY: <i>Va-'ethannan</i>	9:30 AM
Friday, August 7	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	6:00 PM
Saturday, August 8	TORAH STUDY: <i>'Ekev</i>	9:30 AM

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 other's 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 New President!

When I agreed to take on the position of President-Elect of B'nai Sholom last year, I knew that I would be assuming an important and challenging community responsibility. My transition into leadership would correspond with the major congregational transition of saying goodbye to 35-year veteran Rabbi Don Cashman, welcoming an interim Rabbi to our community, and preparing to search for a new settled Rabbi. I did not, however, anticipate that I would be taking up this position during a global pandemic. Nor did I predict that our country would be deeply involved in a painful national conversation about police violence and structural racism as we prepare for what looks to be the most consequential presidential election of my lifetime.

We have all had to grapple with drastic change and anxiety as the events around us have shaken the foundations of our politics, our economy, our culture, and our daily lives. Through this, for many of us, the practices and observances of Jewish life have helped to maintain a sense of order, and our values have helped to steer us through the difficult times. Our building has been closed, but the Temple of Zoom has stayed open, enabling us to have robust attendance at our services. We've continued to pray and learn together, and to plan for our future, even managing to hold our annual meeting remotely and vote with electronic polls! The work that the Rabbinic Search Committee did early in 2020 to understand more about who we are as a congregation and who we want to be takes on a new resonance as our connection to our community remains a constant in a radically changed world.

At the same time, I see and share the pain and anger triggered by the deaths of George Floyd and Breonna Taylor, who are only the most recent victims of a racialized system that embeds structural inequality. In the sixteenth chapter of Deuteronomy, the Torah instructs Moses to appoint judges and officials to assist in governing the people of Israel, but this system is not merely about the mechanics of dispute resolution. "Justice, justice you shall pursue," Adonai admonishes, repeating the principle of justice twice and demanding fairness and lack of partiality. These timeless words echo back to the foundations of Judaism, but remain urgently relevant to us now. They help us to understand that we can expect more of ourselves and of those who govern us.

As we go forward together, we will continue to grapple with the changes and challenges that come at us, both expected and unexpected. I'm confident that our collective investment in our community and our values will keep us on track and enable us to see where our actions can help to bring about a more just world.

Shalom,

Julie Novkov
President

President's Report for Annual Meeting – June 2020

It has been a challenging few months throughout the country and the world. It is important to pause a few minutes to acknowledge our B'nai Sholom successes during the last year.

Our B'nai Sholom membership has grown this past year! Since I spoke at last year's annual meeting, we have welcomed over half a dozen new families or individuals. Several of these include young families with children.

Many of these families came to know us through our enhanced programming for children. The once-a-month Tot Shabbat service, which pre-COVID-19 included snack from 5 to 5:30 and service from 5:30 to 6 and in the current COVID world encourages conversation via Zoom before the service, has brought together parents, children and congregants to sing and pray and dance. Adults are welcome, so I encourage you to join us. The virtual Tot Seder was another opportunity to sing and pray with young families. Thank you, thank you to Libby Liebschutz for organizing, and in some cases leading, these opportunities to bring young families together.

Critical to our on-going viability, the Legacy Society has made great strides toward the development of an endowment. Since the last annual meeting, we've added 10 names to the list who have sent in letters of intent. Making a commitment to the Legacy Campaign means leaving the next generation access to an organization that maintains the traditions and values that we have spent our collective lifetimes honoring. Thank you to chair Mimi Bruce. Fellow congregants: if you have not done so yet, please give Mimi a call to discuss your support of our future.

The Caring Community, under the leadership of Roy and Judy Fruiterman, has supported congregants in time of need. Whether it is due to sickness or a death in the family or the birth of a baby, the Caring Community is available to help. Thank you, Roy and Judy. Beginning next month, Amy Koren-Roth will assume the chair; if you need the Committee's assistance, please call the office.

The Adult Education Committee continued to sponsor opportunities for learning including through the Synagogue Scholars program and through courses taught on-site in the Fall and virtually in the Spring. Thank you, Barney Horowitz, for your leadership.

Member Events organized the Rosh Hashanah luncheons and a fantastic wine and cheese tasting. Thank you, Bettina Stoller, for your leadership.

Social Action continues to provide us with opportunities to make our world a more just place. Their advocacy has included immigration reform, voting, environmental concerns and prevention of hunger. Thank you, Valerie Tabak and Becky Marvin, for your leadership.

Fundraising Committee continues to provide us with fun ways to donate to B'nai Sholom. Honey for the Heart, Hannaford and ShopRite gift cards, Fair Trade market and Clynk Bottle redemptions are but a few ways we can purchase what we need and benefit B'nai Sholom at the same time. Although the Goods and Services Auction was postponed due to COVID-19, I hope we will see it soon. Thank you to Shari Whiting for your leadership.

(Continued on page 4.)

(Continued from page 3.)

The Rabbinic Search Committee has worked tirelessly during the last year to identify a successor as Rabbi Cashman retires. Thank you to committee co-chairs Ann Lowenfels and David Liebschutz and all the members of the Committee for successfully taking on this monumental task.

Last year, Steve Klein and Eric Goldberg agreed to co-chair the Safety and Security Committee; and recently Julie Novkov and Eric Goldberg agreed to co-chair the Reopening Task Force, which will guide us as we SLOWLY re-enter the post COVID-19 world. Thank you for assuming these responsibilities.

Other committees supporting B'nai Sholom include Communications (Ben Marvin), Disabilities (Roy Fruiterman), Finance (Joan Savitt), Hospitality (Linda Strohl), House (Phil Teumim), Landscape (Martie Teumim), Library, Membership (Libby Liebschutz), Nominating (Libby Liebschutz), B'Yachad Religious School board (current reps Julie Friedman, Laura Kaplan and Elizabeth Alowitz), Ritual Committee (Melissa Putterman-Hoffmann), Scholarship (Martha Rozett), Technology and Youth (Maggie Tabak).

These are extraordinary accomplishments in a time that demands extraordinary creativity, flexibility, and commitment. It seemed to me the world changed overnight – in a pre-COVID world B'nai Sholom was a gathering place for our community. And then, in an effort to keep us safe and healthy, we entered the virtual world, so while it was no longer a physical space to which we could gather, it never stopped being a spiritual community to which we still belonged. Within just a few days the Rabbi started virtual services, committees started meeting via Zoom, Caring Community offered assistance for those who couldn't leave their homes, e-mails were sent out every few days to keep congregants informed and classes were moved to Zoom. The work of our synagogue never stopped.

Lastly, I want to acknowledge Rabbi Cashman's retirement after 35 years as the spiritual leader of B'nai Sholom. As you know, due to COVID-19 the celebration has been moved to a date to be determined, at which the community will pay tribute to Rabbi Cashman. However, I want to share a few personal thoughts about what Rabbi Cashman has meant to me and my family.

We've been members of B'nai Sholom for 28 years. When Jack and I joined, we were young with a 4 year-old child. Now we are retirement age, and our son is about to get married. Rabbi Cashman has been with us throughout our entire adult lives. There were Tot Shabbat services with his guitar; there were sad times when he led the shiva minyanim for our parents, and happy times when he prepared us for, and officiated at, Eric's bar mitzvah when he was 13 and my bat mitzvah at 53. He has led us in prayer and song at countless services, and we've learned through our attendance at dozens of classes.

Rabbi Cashman has enriched our spiritual lives in so many ways. He is a man of integrity, who leads us by example. He cares deeply about B'nai Sholom and the larger Jewish community.

We will all miss him. May Rabbi Cashman find joy in the next chapter of his life and may we continue to practice the values and teachings he has instilled in us.

Shalom, Barbara Devore

Our Rabbi Emeritus

On July 1, Rabbi Cashman becomes Rabbi Emeritus of B'nai Sholom. This is a title that may be bestowed at retirement upon a rabbi who has served the congregation for a long time, usually at least 10 years. It is chiefly an honorary title, one that shows respect and esteem after a long term of service. It accords the rabbi emeritus the privilege of having a place of honor in the congregation, and it provides a clear path for the reciprocal flow of communication and information with the successor rabbi.

A rabbi emeritus (*emerita* for a woman) may accept or decline invitations from the successor rabbi(s) to participate in services or to preach, and the rabbi emeritus may officiate at life cycle events for congregants only with the agreement of the successor. In any case, all requests by congregants for officiation are to be directed first to the successor.

An Appreciation

Adult education is on hiatus for the summer, but we will take advantage of the otherwise empty space to give a special shout-out to Rabbi Cashman. He has been, after all, at the heart of making us a congregation of lifelong learners, an exponent of Maimonides' view that "the advancement of learning is the highest commandment." Be it in Torah study or through the widest range of courses from the Tevye stories to Jewish view on sexuality to Hebrew hints in prayer, he has offered us the Jewish perspective in all its richness. Beyond that, he has been an invaluable resource to the committee over the years and a well of encouragement as we tried to put together programming with a unique B'nai Sholom stamp. We will miss the collaboration, the Rabbi's "sechel" (or if you prefer in Yiddish "seykhel"), and we in Adult Ed wish him only the best going forward.

Items Donated for the Auction

The Fundraising Committee would like to thank everyone who donated something for the auction, which was originally scheduled for March. We're planning on using your donations at a future fundraising event. However, we wanted to offer you the opportunity to retrieve your donation(s). If you'd prefer that these items be returned, please contact Lois Gordon rgordon1@nycap.rr.com and we'll work out a way to get them back to you.

WELCOME RABBI DAVID KATZ

B'nai Sholom joyously welcomes Rabbi David Katz of Baltimore to lead our community as our new Interim Rabbi. The congregation approved Rabbi Katz's appointment at the 48th annual meeting held June 18.

Rabbi Katz was ordained in 1981 and awarded the Doctor of Divinity degree from Hebrew Union College in 2006. He has 39 years in the rabbinate, including service to seven congregations as interim rabbi. He has authored numerous articles and is the co-editor of *Reading Between the Lines: New Stories from the Bible*. He served on committees that developed *Mishkan T'filah*, the newest Reform Judaism prayer book, published in 2007, that is used in synagogues throughout North America. Rabbi Katz also developed the "Moments" Engagement Program, a way of organizing synagogue life to assure successful attendance at every program, service and event.

Rabbi Katz has served on the boards of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and National Association of Temple Educators and as president of New York Area Reform Rabbis. He has garnered multiple honors, and awards from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion for scholarship, community service and human relations. Rabbi Katz also holds degrees in theatre from Northwestern University.

A native of Rochester, Rabbi Katz and his wife, Nancy, an artist, appreciate the natural beauty and resources of Upstate New York and the Capital Region. Their daughter, Emily, is executive director of "Justice for Kurds" and founder of Hampstead Rose, a consulting firm specializing in international cross-cultural projects. Their son, Benjamin, is a harpsichordist and composer.

Please join us as we move forward in an exciting transitional year with Rabbi David Katz!



SOCIAL ACTION/SOCIAL JUSTICE

B'nai Sholom is a *Brit Olam* congregation

Judaism teaches respect for the fundamental rights of others as each person's duty to God. "What is hateful to you, do not do to your neighbor" (Babylonian Talmud, Shabbat 31a). Equality in the Jewish tradition is based on the concept that all of God's children are "created in the image of God" (Genesis 1:27). From that flows the biblical injunction, "You shall have one law for the stranger and the citizen alike: for I, Adonai, am your God" (Leviticus 24:22).

(Religious Action Center "Civil Rights" page)

Back in 2016, our Social Action Shabbat focused on civil rights and the issues raised in the book, *The New Jim Crow*. Discussion was led by Dr. Alice Green, Executive Director of The Center for Law and Justice. For me, reading the book revealed my own, previously unrecognized implicit prejudices and ignorance of the history of division driven by politics and biased policies subtly designed to negatively affect minorities. We are now in the middle of a new civil rights movement. I want to be out there protesting. I want to be out there demanding justice. I cannot due to the pandemic and my own risk factors. I am sure I am not the only one in that position. Instead, I am supporting civil rights through other means including continuing my education about the history of suppression and abuse of people of color in our country. I am also contributing to organizations in support of civil liberties and justice. This is a time to read, to learn, to reflect, to act.

When we are blind to our own ignorance, we deny ourselves the opportunity to learn, to grow, to change.

Becky Marvin

RESOURCES AND OPPORTUNITIES

Religious Action Center (Reform Movement) <https://rac.org/civil-rights>

White Accomplices: <https://www.whiteaccomplices.org>

Antiracism Resources: bit.ly/ANTIRACISMRESOURCES

Donate to an organization: [The Bail Project](#), [The Minnesota Freedom Fund](#), [NAACP Legal Defense Fund](#), [Communities United Against Police Brutality](#), and [The American Civil Liberties Union](#)

An Appreciation

A rabbi is many things: spiritual leader, teacher, guide, ethical compass – and communicator. For 35 years, our families, our visitors and the entire Jewish community have benefited from one terrific communicator in Rabbi Don Cashman. From scintillating sermons, monthly messages and media sound bites to Bob Dylan and high-brow (and occasionally low-brow) humor, we've enjoyed it all. Thank you, Rabbi Cashman, and may you enjoy continued good health, fulfillment and making great music!

From the Communications Committee

An Appreciation

Although the Library Committee decides what belongs in the B'nai Sholom Library, Rabbi Cashman has been an invaluable resource to the Library Committee. The Committee members will sorely miss the Rabbi's insights into where a book belongs and what it's about, what books to order, what books to keep, what books to toss (Rabbi's a keeper, not a tosser!), and so much more. May the library continue to strive to meet the Rabbi's idea of a good Jewish library.

Editor's note: One of a continuing series of personal expressions written by congregants and contributed by the Ritual Committee under the theme of "I Come to Services Because..."

Why I Enjoy Going to Services

by Mark Reeder

There are a number of reasons why I go to services on Friday nights, but the main one is that I enjoy myself there. It allows me to spend a little time in quiet contemplation, which feels good. It is a lovely way to spend time with my wife Cheryl. I feel the power of participating in something with such an ancient tradition. Sometimes, when saying particular prayers, I picture myself being one of the worshippers of 2,500 years ago, when one believed that God caused earthquakes, floods and death. I let myself experience the extreme fear of God that they must have felt, and in doing so I better appreciate what may have motivated the need to recite endlessly "You are the greatest" in all its many versions.

I love the music and thank Rabbi Cashman for this. I enjoy watching and listening to him play the guitar and appreciate the style and enthusiasm with which he brings forth the music. The Middle Eastern tunes are my favorites because they feel like they are ancient and are from the source. I am not that big on new melodies, but then, by about the third time, I usually end up loving them.

My favorite part of the service is the silent prayer. I don't pray much otherwise, but this gives me a chance – and I take full advantage of it – to pray for all my many loved ones near and far. I can't say I am sure that it has any effect, but it makes me feel good and maybe it does work. I like trying to read the Hebrew prayers, especially the ones that go slowly and give me a fighting chance to keep up. Onegs are relaxed and nice – occasionally it is the turn for one of my favorite bakers and I happily eat too much. I like seeing the people, ones that I have known for many years, but also folks who are new. Finally, I like that services are reasonably short – smart move on the part of Reform Judaism. I do have one recommendation for further reform: Yom Kippur. How about just two services – Kol Nidre and the morning service. And then we all reconvene after sundown for bagels and whitefish. (We can do the "the gates are closing" part while finishing up our naps at home.)

B'Yachad Graduates – The Class of 2020



An Appreciation

To our prime auctioneer: thank you for years of your support and for your talents at helping us out. You bring out the best in people! We'll miss your special powers of Jewish guilt to heat up bidding at the auction.

We wish you all the best in this new chapter in your life. May you always have the winning bid!

With love from the Fundraising Committee

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For more information contact:

Maxine Goldberg

- 518-729-4751 / maxm0304@yahoo.com



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Caring Community

by Amy Koren-Roth

I have assumed the role of being the co-ordinator for the Caring Community. This year will be extra interesting with impacts of COVID-19 still lingering, the retirement of Rabbi Cashman and the interim rabbi starting while we still have many restrictions about congregating. I want to thank Judy and Roy Fruiterman for their leadership this past year and for sharing their guidance with me as I start this new task.

I want to make sure that I have a complete list of those who are willing and able to be called upon for making meals for congregants in need. Please send me an email (amykr76@gmail.com) if you would like to be on this list. In the past, congregants were asked to make double when they were cooking, labelling it and bringing it to store in the small freezer. I will explore reinstating this practice and might have a call with those on the list to get input.

Another aspect of the Caring Community is what we lovingly call the Shiva Minyanaires. It's congregants who have pledged, to the extent possible, to ensuring that a grieving family will have a minyan for a home service following a funeral. More people are needed who can make the commitment to "drop everything" to help bring comfort to congregants at one of the most difficult moments in their lives. Please email me if you want to be part of this mitzvah.

Thanks for all you do as members of the BSRC community. I look forward to working with many of you in a variety of capacities, whether to provide support to your families in times of need or help the rest of us show our care to our community.

Be safe and I hope to hear from many of you.

The following Yahrzeits will be observed in July.

7/3 Cindy Berkowitz*; Lynn Horowitz; Saul Ikler; Janet Samuels Greenbaum*; Samuel Englander*; Buehl Ray; Celia Kaufman*; Robert Harris; Lillian Shanks; Soloman Dachman

7/10 Richard T. Crawford; Eleanor Finkelstein; Esther Epstein*; Harold Roth*; Morris Bosin; Sonny Brenner

7/17 Paul Tafler*; Naftali Propp; Leslie Adler; Rosemary Kindlon Roe; Abraham Silverbush; Gerda Frankel; Jean Norris Rudman; Rose Lazoroff*; Ellen Rudinger; Hyman Moskowitz; Gerald Fruiterman; Barbara Wachs; Edith Eidelman; Barney Ginsburg*; Rudolph Stern*

7/24 S. Gerald Duckor; Dror Koren; Adele Pastor; Bernice Smith; Fred Aron; Benjamin Binewitch; Evelyn Pogoda

7/31 Kim Kuang Ho; Helen Pollack Adler; Alex M. Rabineau*; Samuel C. Warshaw*; Rose Gottesman Pollack; Peter Pflanz; Jacob Stein; Alice Tausig Rozett

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

THE CONGREGATION NOTES WITH THANKS THESE CONTRIBUTIONS

General Fund

In memory of **Mildy Fischel** by Mark and Cheryl Reeder.

In memory of **Gerry Green** by Ellie and Randy Davis.

In memory of **Rae Spitalnic** by Katelyn Ouellette DiPaola and David DiPaola.

In memory of **Harriet Schaffer** by Ben and Becky Marvin.

In memory of **Moses Khazam** by Ben and Becky Marvin.

In memory of **Ernst Swiwcz** by Ruth and Herb Swift.

In memory of **Werner P. Frankel** by Ruth and Herb Swift.

In memory of **Moses Khazam** by Amy Sternstein.

In honor of **Rabbi Cashman's Retirement** by Julie Friedman and Bob Negriz.

In honor of **Rabbi Cashman's years of services to Congregation B'nai Sholom and the Albany Jewish Community** by Sharon Flom and Steve Huz.

With profound thanks **for purchasing B'nai Sholom's new WiFi Mesh Network** by Phil and Martie Teumim.

With profound thanks **for purchasing B'nai Sholom's new digital thermometer** by Christine Blackman.

General Fund – Landscaping Fund

In memory of **Ida Domfort** by Howard and Marcus Domfort.

Social Action Fund

In memory of **Harriet Schaffer** by Anne Hausgaard.

In memory of **Moses Khazam** by Anne Hausgaard.

Social Action Fund – Vera Propp Fund

In memory of **Hal Rosenthal** by Mari Vosburgh

Endowment Fund

In memory of **Earl Marvin** by Ben and Becky Marvin.

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Katelyn Ouellette DiPaola and David DiPaola.

In memory of **Robert Goody and Hyman Cohen** by Nancy Goody.

With profound thanks **to the Caring Community and everyone who has helped care for me over the last four months** by Deb Adler.

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JFS wishes you and your family a meaningful,
happy and healthy New Year.

RABBI: David Katz (*eff. July 1, 2020*)

RABBI EMERITUS: Donald P. Cashman (*eff. July 1, 2020*)

PRESIDENT: Julie Novkov

OFFICE MANAGER: Christine Blackman

BOOKKEEPER: Jean Dashnaw can be reached at bookbnaisholom@gmail.com

OFFICE HOURS: MON/WED/THURS/FRI 9:30 AM–3:30 PM

Articles and news received after the deadline are subject to omission.
As a rule, the bulletin deadline is the 2nd Wednesday of every month. Adherence to the deadline is critical to ensuring the bulletin is sent out in a timely manner.

<u>Period Covered</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
August.....	July 8
September.....	August 12