

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

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JUNE 2022

Phone: 518-482-5283
Visit us at <http://www.bnaisholomalbany.org>
SIVAN/TAMUZ 5782

***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 for services are sent out weekly.

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

Friday, June 3	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, June 4	EXTENDED STUDY	10:00 AM
	YIZKOR & TIKKUN LEIL SHAVUOT	7:30 PM
Friday, June 10	TOT SHABBAT SERVICE	5:30 PM
	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, June 11	TORAH STUDY	9:30 AM
Friday, June 17	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, June 18	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, June 24	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, June 25	TORAH STUDY	9:30 AM
	SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE	10:30 AM
Friday, July 1	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, July 2	EXTENDED STUDY	10:00 AM

Visit <https://reformjudaism.org/learning> for each week's parashah.

B'nai Sholom's 2022 Annual Meeting

The annual meeting will be held on Thursday, June 23, and will begin at 7 p.m.

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 Rabbi...

I recently had a “debate” with a relative stranger about when the summer season begins. She insisted that it was June first and when I suggested that June *twenty*-first was more appropriate, she began questioning my sources (and my sanity). Eventually, after consulting with the sage Rav Google, we managed to confirm both of our statements. Here in the US, summer begins on June 21 this year; and in Russia, from whence my counterpart emigrated, summer does indeed begin on June 1. However you slice it – whether you’re waiting for June 1, June 21 or simply Memorial Day (when the fashion industry says we can break out our white clothes) – for those of us in the Northern Hemisphere, spring is winding down and summer is on its way.

This month is also a time of transition on the Jewish calendar. First, we begin a new book of the Torah; we say a temporary farewell to Leviticus (*Vayikra*), which focuses on the priestly code, and begin reading Numbers (*Bamidbar*). Although the Israelites have already been “in the wilderness” – the literal translation of *Bamidbar* – for a while now, this next chapter in our collective experience gives some more action-packed examples of how we learn to live as a community. We conduct a census, learn several ways **not** to challenge authority, learn productive ways **to** challenge authority/popular opinion (and take a small step toward gender equality), say goodbye to two of our leaders, figure out how to accommodate the needs of various segments of the community, engage in several battles and of course encounter a talking donkey along the way.

Additionally, the evening of **Saturday, June 4**, brings us Shavuot, the third and final pilgrimage festival of 5782 (Sukkot and Passover being the first and second, respectively). Approaching Shavuot – and especially our Tikkun Leil study session – is similar to our journey as recounted in Numbers. We have tracked our progress from the time when we were simply a mixed multitude hastily sprung free from the grasp of the Egyptians, to our eventual transformation into a cohesive community – a people.

This experience of transition is touching us as a synagogue as well. On **Sunday, June 26**, the congregation will finally have an opportunity to celebrate its 35 years under the guidance and leadership of Rabbi Don Cashman and to wish him and Sharona Wachs a fond farewell as they prepare for their own journey to the Holy Land. We hope you’ll join us as we honor the rabbi who presided over 70% of B’nai Sholom’s existence!

In this season of change, I wish us all sunny skies, lots of learning and a continued sense of connection to the congregational community that supports us along the way.

L’shalom,
Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot

From Our President...

As my presidency draws to a close, I offer to you something of a farewell address. The farewell address has a long history, with the two most famous examples of George Washington and Moses being close to my heart as a Jewish political scientist. And indeed, like Washington, I can aver “that I have, with good intentions, contributed towards the organization and administration of the ~~government~~ [shul] the best exertions of which a very fallible judgment was capable.”

Both Moses and Washington took the occasion to celebrate what their nations had accomplished under their leadership during difficult times. They also couldn't resist providing some advice for the future. Washington famously advised national unity across geographic sectional lines and warned of the dangers of foreign entanglements and military expansion. Moses reminded the people of Israel of the covenant to which they had agreed and counseled them that they had the capacity to choose, as individuals and as a community, between a path of “life and prosperity [or] death and destruction.” While I don't think we need to worry that B'nai Sholom will find itself enmeshed in international intrigue with Great Britain and France, I don't anticipate political struggle between those of us who reside to the north and south of Albany respectively, and the creation of a standing army isn't in our budget, I *would* encourage us to embrace Jewish values as we look to the future.

The last two years have been tumultuous. Within our community, of course, we were prepared for change, as we knew that we would be saying goodbye to Rabbi Cashman, experiencing a year of interim rabbinic leadership and welcoming a new settled Rabbi. But we have also experienced a global pandemic, a revitalized civil rights movement focusing on police violence, a bitterly contested national election, an attempted insurrection, rising concerns about anti-Semitism, and the Russian invasion of Ukraine, the home of many of our ancestors. We have not been through a 40-year sojourn in the desert after escaping slavery, nor have we survived the first years of a new form of government, but we've been through a lot.

The fixed stars that anchored us through all of this have remained and can guide us in the future. I will name just a few.

Pikuach nefesh. We have always honestly acknowledged and addressed the danger of COVID-19 and recently we have undertaken a comprehensive review of our physical and cybersecurity at B'nai Sholom and secured funding to improve it. In the future, I hope we will continue to prioritize the safety of our members. The COVID Response Committee and our Safety and Security Committee are well poised to lead the way.

Kehillah. Our community has been so important, and I hope it will remain so. Our embrace of multi-access services and events have both broadened our community and made it more accessible. We stand at the threshold of the Audacious Hospitality initiative, which will expand and extend our commitment to community in many positive ways that I can foresee and hopefully some that I can't.

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Tikkun olam. Our members have led and participated in many responses to injustice in our community and in our world. From Black Lives Matter to protecting voting rights and encouraging voting to demanding health care reform to raising the alarm on climate change, engagement with the problems of the world has been a hallmark of B'nai Sholom and I hope will continue to be one of our signature identities.

Tzedakah. Our members have been generous with both their money and their time. We have needed a larger budget to address pandemic costs, new technology, the costs of two rabbinic searches and other issues, while our traditional in-person fundraising activities have been on hold. Yet, we have been managing and the Legacy Society has grown. Our new model for multi-access services demands a lot more volunteer labor, and many people have stepped forward. More than 400 volunteer opportunities were promised through Moments, many of which have already been successfully claimed. We will need all of this energy going forward and then some to achieve our brightest dreams and enable B'nai Sholom to be the best center for Jewish life and catalyst for Jewish values that it can be.

While the “farewell address” conceit situates me as a leader, I want to emphasize that I have done nothing alone. I’ve been blessed to work with two talented and insightful rabbis, Rabbi Katz and Rabbi Weisbrot. Christine Blackman has somehow managed to keep countless administrative and technical balls in the air through all the chaos. Our new bookkeeper, Maryann Murray-Wygel, has worked very hard with the Finance Committee (Gail Golderman and Shari Whiting in particular) to improve our accounting system. Our committees have also done so much; I’ve been particularly grateful to the committees I’ve engaged with the most: Ritual, Safety and Security, Building and Landscape, Communications, Adult Education, Social Action/Social Justice and of course our representatives on the B’Yachad and Mifgash boards.

Finally, to our own Board of Trustees I owe an enormous debt of gratitude. I have called upon their engagement and thoughtfulness regarding many a thorny situation, and they have always provided unparalleled wisdom. And thank you to every congregant for your own continued commitment to and engagement with B'nai Sholom.

L'shalom,

Julie Novkov

First “Annual Fundraising Appeal” Celebrating 50 Years and Beyond

With the support of the Board of Trustees, B’nai Sholom undertakes our first Annual Fundraising Campaign to sustain and support the synagogue now and into the future.

In the coming months, you will hear about opportunities to give to one of three main areas:

Annual Maintenance and Operations

Examples of the types of spending in this category:

- Website re-design and maintenance
- Digital prayer book
- Upgrading technology for virtual programming
- Painting and small maintenance items
- Landscaping
- New equipment, laptop computers, etc.

Circle of Life Capital Projects

Past projects funded with Circle of Life Funds:

- Sanctuary chairs and new carpet
- Bathroom renovation
- Lounge furniture
- New copier
- Furnace repair

Examples of current needs:

- Audio system - \$2,600
- Streaming technology - \$6,000
- Paint Sanctuary, social hall, lobby and offices - \$5,000
- Re-tile or carpet school wing hallway and lobby - \$5,000

Legacy Society- Raising funds for the endowment

Did you know that B’nai Sholom has an endowment worth about \$165,000? Of this amount \$129,000 represents funds raised from the Legacy Society. These funds have generated \$4,500 in spending to support next year’s operating budget.

We need your help to make this a success, so watch for more to come!

Maxine Goldberg
Shari Whiting
Co-Chairs

JESSE SAPERSTEIN, AUTHOR AND ADVOCATE FOR PEOPLE WITH AUTISM, TO DISCUSS LIFE AS A JEW ON THE SPECTRUM IN TALK AT B'NAI SHOLOM

Jesse Saperstein, popular author, advocate for people with autism and motivational speaker, will discuss his experiences as a Jew living on the autism spectrum in a talk Friday, June 3, during the congregation's Shabbat service.

The program was originally planned for February, which is Jewish Disability Awareness and Inclusion Month. It has been moved to June so that we can have a live audience to better engage with Jesse's presentation and meet and greet him in person.

Jesse is the author of *Atypical: Life with Asperger's in 20 1/3 Chapters* and *Getting a Life with Asperger's*, both published by Penguin Group (USA). He lives with Asperger's syndrome, a high-functioning form of autism that impairs social abilities while enhancing many other qualities. Jesse was included as one of the 50 unsung American heroes in *American Spirit* by New York Times bestselling authors Taya Kyle and Jim DeFelice.

Jesse's numerous public speaking credits include the United Nations, lecturing at the Mall of America in Minneapolis and a February 2020 appearance on "Dr. Phil."

After graduating from Hobart and William Smith Colleges in 2004, Jesse conquered the 2,174-mile Appalachian Trail to benefit the Joey DiPaolo AIDS Foundation, raising more than \$19,000 to enable children who had contracted HIV/AIDS through prenatal transmission to attend summer camp. He moved to Albany in 2015 to live in his first apartment as an independent adult. Jesse serves as the media and activities liaison for the College Experience Program run by Living Resources Inc. with The College of Saint Rose, which gives individuals with disabilities the ability to attend a mainstream college with a modified curriculum and provides life skills as well as employment training.

For more information about the program, contact Roy Fruiterman, Committee on Disabilities chair, at rfruiterman@gmail.com.

We look forward to learning from Jesse!

B'nai Sholom's Caring Community

The Caring Community can call on congregants who are willing and able to mobilize quickly when events such as births, bereavement and accidents make their inevitable way into our lives.

If you or someone you know needs assistance, help and support when:

- ✓ someone is sick or confined
- ✓ a new baby arrives
- ✓ there's been a death in the family
- ✓ there's a tragedy, accident or trauma

please call the office manager and/or Rabbi Weisbrot – 518-482-5283 – to notify us of the situation so we can initiate our support services.

"On three things does the world stand: On Torah, on worship and on deeds of lovingkindness." Pirkei Avot 1:2

Social Action/Social Justice

We're Marching at Capital Pride

SUNDAY, JUNE 12 – Washington Park

Will you be marching behind the B'nai Sholom banner? Part of our covenant with the world as a Brit Olam congregation includes supporting the rights of the LGBTQ+ community and of all people. Rabbi Jonah Pesner (Senior Vice President of URJ) said, "In actions to repair the world we can hear God's voice."

The civil rights for the LGBTQ+ community are rooted in the belief that all human beings are created *b'tzelem Elohim*, in the image of God, and in *Leviticus* 19:18 we are told, "You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

If you'll be marching, be sure to call Candy Raderman at 518-466-2328 or email Becky Marvin at beckymarvin4574@gmail.com so we can keep count and arrange carpools if necessary.

About the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival

The Poor People's Campaign (PPC), the continuation of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s Poor People's Campaign that began in 1968, has current ties and backing from our URJ Religious Action Center. Now the New York State PPC needs funds to send buses to Washington for the June 18 Moral March on Washington. Not all participants engaged in this work are able to self-fund their trip. Each of us has the opportunity to partner in lifting up the voices of the poor in New York by providing support for those buses. To contribute urgently needed funding, go to: <https://actionnetwork.org/fundraising/new-york-buses-to-the-mass-poor-peoples-assembly-and-moral-march-on-washington>

We also encourage you to go to the Moral March on Washington:

<https://linktr.ee/nysppch><https://actionnetwork.org/fundraising/new-york-buses-to-the-mass-poor-peoples-assembly-and-moral-march-on-washington>

From the PPC web page:

In 1968, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and many others called for a "revolution of values" in America. They sought to build a broad, fusion movement that could unite poor and impacted communities across the country. Their name was a direct cry from the underside of history: The Poor People's Campaign.

Today, the Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival has picked up this unfinished work. From Alaska to Arkansas, the Bronx to the border, people are coming together to confront the interlocking evils of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, militarism and the war economy and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism. We understand

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that as a nation we are at a critical juncture — that we need a movement that will shift the moral narrative, impact policies and elections at every level of government and build lasting power for poor and impacted people.

In June 2019, we convened over 1,000 community leaders in Washington, D.C., for the Poor People’s Moral Action Congress, which included the largest presidential candidates’ forum of the pre-debate season, the release of our [Poor People’s Moral Budget](#) and a hearing before the House Budget Committee on the issues facing the 140 million poor and low-income people in the nation.

In the coming year, our ranks will increase as we broaden our efforts and stretch the banner of the Poor People’s Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival even wider. We rise together because:

1. We rise to demand that [the 140 million poor and low-income people in our nation](#) — from every race, creed, color, sexuality and place — are no longer ignored, dismissed or pushed to the margins of our political and social agenda.
2. We rise not as left or right, Democrat or Republican, but as a moral fusion movement to build power, build moral activism, build voter participation, and we won’t be silent any more!
3. We rise [to change the moral narrative](#) and demand that the interlocking injustices of systemic racism, poverty, ecological devastation, the war economy/militarism and the distorted moral narrative of religious nationalism all be ended.
4. We rise to challenge the lie of scarcity in the midst of abundance.
5. We rise to lift the voices and faces of poor and low-income Americans and their moral allies with a new vision of love, justice and truth for America that says poverty can be abolished and change can come.

If you believe it’s time to rise, join us!

STILL SERVING IT UP AT THE SOUP KITCHEN!

On the second day of Passover (Easter Sunday), B’nai Sholom volunteers prepped and packaged meals-to-go for 89 guests at the Sister Maureen Joyce Soup Kitchen. Again, we sweetened it with home-baked goods from our congregants. Thank you to our volunteers: Seth Edelman, Ian Duckor, Hayden Schwartz, Janet Strominger and Steve Klein. If you would like to help next time or know of a soup kitchen that is need of volunteers, please contact Hayden Schwartz.

Social Action/Social Justice Committee Reviews Its Multi-faceted and Vital Work

(Editor's Note: Presented by committee co-chair Valerie Tabak at the April 29 Social Action/Social Justice Shabbat)

Shabbat Sholom and thank you for being here to celebrate and learn with us during this special Shabbat service.

Despite the many challenges of these past two years, our Social Action/Social Justice Committee has grown in both our committee's name and our membership numbers. We are so pleased to have the many minds and hands that make all that we do possible, even during these truly unusual and uncertain times. Additionally, we are continually invigorated because many of the projects that we bring to this congregation become congregational efforts. Thank you everyone.

Before I share some of the many undertakings of this committee, I want to thank Rabbi Weisbrot for attending our committee meetings that she works to fit into her busy schedule, and also we thank the members of the Delmar Presbyterian Church who partner with us for food and clothing collections and through our shared work with Family Promise of the Capital District.

Speaking of Family Promise, we are fortunate to have Anita Stein as our liaison who keeps us apprised of the opportunities to provide meals and, once again, companionship to the guests of Family Promise, and Becky Marvin who served on the board and continues as chair of fundraising. We thank the congregants who donated items for this year's auction. If you are unfamiliar with this organization, please reach out to Anita for information. As the only Jewish house of worship in our area that is a member congregation, we are proud of B'nai Sholom's commitment to this organization that strives to house families who find themselves homeless.

Food insecurity has increased as the pandemic has raged on. Members of our committee and congregation have continued their volunteer efforts at the Sister Maureen Joyce Soup Kitchen. With thanks to Steve Klein for coordinating and Janet Strominger for all of her efforts in feeding the homeless, we thank all who have baked desserts that are served as part of the meal. Hayden Schwartz has stepped up to being our next coordinator as we seek additional venues for which our help is needed.

Thanks to all, too, who have made it possible for us to stock refrigerators for Free Food Fridge Albany. We will continue to seek monetary donations and volunteers to help us provide fresh food for those in need.

Our collections for non-perishable food and diapers have enabled replenishment of the Little Food Pantries in Albany and one in Schenectady, when restocking is necessary, with thanks to the generosity of our congregants. In keeping with this, the donations brought for tonight's "Reverse Oneg" will certainly be beneficial to so many.

Clothing collections have continued in both fall and spring. Clothing collected at this year's spring drive will be taken to the City Mission.

With our kickoff event of May 5, 2021, many members of our B'nai Sholom family furthered our congregation's commitment as a Brit Olam Congregation, "to strengthen and connect our congregation to Reform Judaism's social justice endeavors and priorities," by participating in an evening with Rabbi Jonathan Kligler, singer-songwriter, activist and educator Reggie Harris, and our own president, author and educator Julie Novkov.

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While chronicling the film *Shared Legacies* and the major unifying events that brought both prominent members and concerned citizens of the Black and Jewish communities together to demand voting, educational and employment equity during the height of the Civil Rights Movement, 1954 through 1968, Rabbi Kligler and Reggie wove their many-year friendship into the film's important themes that Jewish people have a particular history, including slavery and near annihilation due to both slavery and the Holocaust, into their conversation. Our moderator, Julie Novkov, posed questions that our members had submitted, which kept the discussion relevant from the perspectives of the film's many important historical moments, through current relations among and between members of Black and Jewish communities. Out of this exciting evening came our now worn and tattered **HINENU, WE ARE HERE, BLACK LIVES MATTER** banners that proudly graced our front lawn. We are currently investigating more permanent signage that can show our congregational support for causes that are important to our Jewish values.

Our Rabbi is working to develop relationships with clergy in the area who can help to guide us with what is needed in the Black community so that our work will be beneficial to what is needed and wanted.

Out of our growing awareness that inclusivity is a key element for growing and maintaining our place in the Jewish community, the Reform Jewish Movement's focused effort, Audacious Hospitality, was brought to the Board of Trustees, and we are so grateful that not only was this approved, but a subcommittee is being formed to begin the work. We are excited that Steve Gottlieb has agreed to be our committee's representative on this group. It is reinforcing to know that we are already of the belief that we are a more vibrant Jewish community when we fully incorporate the diversity that is the reality of modern Jewish life.

Literacy initiatives, which are funded by the generous contributions to our Vera Propp Book Fund and Books for Babies program, have continued to give us the opportunity to purchase baby board books which, along with information outlining the importance of reading to your baby, is distributed to organizations that encourage reading as a practice in families where reading may not be a tradition. Our latest order of 255 books is soon to be packaged and delivered to the Schuyler Inn, Dr. Bob Paeglow's office and The Baby Institute among others. We continue with our monetary support to help purchase books for well-child checkups at the Whitney Young Health Care Center in Albany. Our synagogue-wide book collection for the RED Bookshelf was an amazing success.

As a member of the Capital Region Interfaith Creation Care Coalition (CRICCC), the committee has had an incredible representative in Barry Pendergrass who has continued to keep us alerted to climate and environmental issues that affect us all. Sharing volunteer opportunities and providing websites and phone numbers to make our voices heard through support of legislation and showing up to support projects and causes, we are consistently made aware of what we can do to help ensure that we will have a habitable planet for us and for future generations. Barry has now expanded his role and is our representative to Religious Action Center of NY (RAC NY) and its Climate Covenant - A Campaign to Combat Climate Change, which began with a ZOOM kick off in March and a regional retreat held in May. Please reach out to Barry for more information and take a look at the RAC-NY website.

Last year, RAC-NY's focus was on racial justice and parole reform. Gail Volk led us into congregational participation in statewide ZOOM calls and telephone messaging with our

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local and national leaders, including Senator Charles Schumer. The postcard writing campaign, GET OUT THE VOTE, saw many congregants participate in alerting Georgians that they needed to make sure they were registered to vote. Our voices were heard!

Universal Health Care, an ongoing initiative of CDAUH, the Capital District Alliance for Universal Healthcare, has Dave Ray as our representative. CDAUH is now part of a coalition to get more people to volunteer and joined forces with the Poor People's Campaign and the Labor-Religion Coalition. Broadening the base is the goal. Trying to get universal health care state by state is the current strategy.

It is my pleasure to serve alongside Becky Marvin as cochair of this amazing committee.

On a side note, taking a page from David Liebschutz's playbook, I am proud to stand here at the bimah on the **56th** anniversary of my bat mitzvah at Temple Beth Sholom in New City, NY.

Again, thank you B'nai Sholom congregants for all you do in helping to make this committee's work not only meaningful but beneficial to our community and our world.

A SOCIAL ACTION/SOCIAL JUSTICE ESSAY by Hayden Schwartz

(Editor's Note: Delivered by Hayden at the April 29 Social Action/Social Justice Shabbat)

Thank you for being here tonight. When I first agreed to write something for this special service, I had some semblance of concepts I would speak on, but I could not have foreseen what would come to fruition in my life in the coming weeks to change my perspectives. I had an idealized sense of what the refugee and immigration system operated like when I first took this on. However, it wasn't until volunteering with the incoming flux of refugees in this area that I truly began to grasp the dire struggle of refugees, "asylees" and special "parolees," which are non-citizens who have been granted temporary status, that have been made to flee from everything they have ever known. The global refugee crisis is real, and it surrounds all of us. We, even just human to human, cannot sit idly and turn the other way while our neighbors struggle to feed their children, endure survival with minimal resources and try to navigate an entirely different world and culture, much less while not knowing the colloquial languages.

There are two fundamental aspects of Judaism that I hold very close to my heart: the practices of *tzedakah*, justice or charity; and the overarching concept of *tikkun olam*, repairing the world. *Tzedakah* is an especially significant principle in Judaism, because it requires us to go beyond just giving charity - it is a direct act of social justice, and we are required to share empathy, compassion and dignity with those whom we are helping. Judaism teaches us that the donor benefits just as much from the act of *tzedakah* as the recipient, as this is a way in which the donor receives the merit of doing pious work. In Maimonides' words, "Whoever gives *tzedakah* to the poor with a sour expression and in a surly manner, even if they give a thousand gold pieces, loses their merit. One should instead give cheerfully and joyfully and empathize with them in their sorrow."

To tie these things together, I want to draw upon the collective history of many of the people in this room, as being a product of both modern day and historical diaspora. One of the questions being proposed tonight is how the current refugees landing in Albany arrived here of all places, but can we not ask the same question of ourselves? How did a bunch of descendants of the Levant arrive in whatever multicultural soups Eastern Europe, the Iberian Peninsula and Northern African nations were in the 19th century, create entirely new ethnic cultures, and now, 200 years later, we ended up in the middle of upstate New York, ever changing and reforming how we see ourselves in relation to the world? Many of our grandparents did not necessarily come here to open arms; our names were anglicized, our ethnic identities stripped down to become "naturalized" citizens. We were subjected to discrimination and subhuman levels of subsistence. During the darkest hours of the Shoah, many of our ancestors fleeing pure terror were turned away from countless nations, and the effects of the horrors of genocide ripped through the entire fabric of humanity. Should we follow in the footsteps of the people that refused to warmly welcome us when we were strangers?

I am calling on my family of congregants at B'nai Sholom: how do you wish to change the world? We can begin in our own backyards, supporting the people around us. A community is nothing without people coming together for the greater good of humanity at large. We can simultaneously think globally while acting locally. By working together alongside refugees and asylees, we can at once reflect on how we relate to the world around us, while also growing and strengthening the bonds we share through our collective trials and tribulations. All human beings deserve to feel and be dignified, regardless of creed, color, sexuality, gender expression, culture or any other differentiating aspect that makes it possible for us to "other" another group of people. There are so many different and even seemingly insignificant ways in which we can act; the first step is asking how to be of service.

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HOW TO BE OF SERVICE

USCRI: United States Committee for Refugees and Immigrants

99 Pine, Suite 101, Albany refugees.org 518-459-1790

--Good Neighbor Team Program (help a refugee family transition to their new lives and achieve self-sufficiency)

Contact Margaret Slotnick, Community Sponsorship Coordinator

mslotnick@uscri-albany.org

--Volunteer contact info@uscri-albany.org and indicate field of interest:

mentorship	legal	transportation	teaching
administration/office	youth	technical support	home set-up

RISSE: Refugee and Immigrant Support Services of Emmaus

715 Morris St., Albany 518-621-1041 volunteer@risse-albany.org

MSKP: Muslim Soup Kitchen Project (collection center supporting all in need)

350 Troy Schenectady Rd., Latham 518-608-1255

Open: Tuesdays 10:00 am – noon and 5:30 pm – 6:30 pm

Saturdays 10:00 am – noon

Collecting:

Kitchenware (large pots, pans, dishes, glasses, silverware, towels, potholders)

Household essentials (cleaners, sponges, paper towels, garbage bags, detergent etc.)

Bathroom supplies (towels, bathmats, shower curtains and rings, TP and tissue)

School supplies

Personal hygiene products

***Furniture and toys: CALL TO CHECK ABOUT CURRENT NEED

PLEASE: no TVs, VCRs or tapes, electronics or household knick-knacks and decorative items

From the Fundraising Committee: Flowers and Sneakers Help B'nai Sholom and the Planet

Now that the flower-and-bulb sale has ended, we are pleased to report that 53 individual products were sold! Thank you to all who helped make this fundraiser a success. Watch for a different variety of products to be offered for fall planting.

The collection of sneakers continues. As of May 17, we have mailed in six bags for a total of 82 pairs of sneakers that won't be going to the landfill! This has kept 2,460 pounds of carbon dioxide from entering the atmosphere and saved 185,074 gallons of water from being used. Thank you to everyone who has donated sneakers, and please keep up the good work!

NEW IN THE LIBRARY

The B'nai Sholom Library has added two new books by the acclaimed biblical scholar Avivah Gottlieb Zornberg:

- *The Hidden Order of Intimacy: Reflections on the Book of Leviticus*, the latest in her series of biblical commentaries. Zornberg cites rabbinic authorities as well as philosophers, psychoanalysts and literary masters in discussing humanity's encounter with the divine and deconstructing the mystical fourth book of the Bible.
- *Moses: A Human Life*, a biography of Moses the man and a deep engagement with the legacy of Moses.

The Library's impressive collection of Zornberg books includes:

- *The Beginning of Desire: Reflections on Genesis*
- *The Particulars of Rapture: Reflections on Exodus*
- *Bewilderments: Reflections on the Book of Numbers; and*
- *The Murmuring Deep: Reflections on the Biblical Unconscious*

In addition, the Library also has added *The Exodus: How It Happened and Why It Matters*, a history behind the story of the Exodus, by Richard Elliott Friedman, author of *Who Wrote the Bible*. Friedman is a renowned Torah commentator and an expert on the biblical documentary hypothesis.

Remember, the B'nai Sholom Library is available whenever the building is open. Please be sure to sign out all books that you borrow and return them promptly so that others may enjoy them.

****Special Event****

Book Folding Class
Monday, July 18, 7 PM to 8 PM
at B'nai Sholom (In-person Only)

Join us on July 18 as Beth Oldrich, author of *Book Folding for Beginners and Beyond*, will lead a workshop on book folding. Book folding is the art of repurposing hardcover books into book sculptures, a modern twist on origami. It's an easy craft to learn, is eco-friendly and would be fun for ages 13 to adult. We will be making a Jewish star, an example of which can be seen on the synagogue's website under "Adult Education."

Beth is the daughter of temple members Bruce and Edith Goldstein.

There is no charge, and all one needs to bring is a hardcover book of more than 100 pages to use for the folding. Call the synagogue to register.

Spotlight on Our Newest Members: Scott Jason Miller

Editor's Note: One of a series of articles from the Membership Committee to introduce those who have recently joined B'nai Sholom. This month we welcome Scott Jason Miller.



Scott is originally from Brooklyn. He moved to Albany with his family in 1977 after his mother received a promotion with New York Telephone. Upon graduation from Albany High, Scott also took a job with NY Telephone and then AT&T in the Operator Services division. Scott was a district union delegate for the Telephone Traffic Union. He then joined the insurance industry as a claims examiner, first with Empire Blue Cross and then with The Travelers. While with The Travelers, Scott was promoted to business manager for their Screen Actors Guild dedicated service center here in Albany until its closing in 1999.

Scott returned to New York City in 2002 to study acting at the Stella Adler Studios as well as to complete his bachelor of science degree in media, culture and communication at New York University. Scott then appeared in several productions with the Roundabout Theater Company, Shakespeare in the Park and the Delacourt Theater. He joined in as a casting associate with Pacific Shore Productions, owned and operated in NYC by his spouse, Sam, until Sam's death in 2014. In 2018, Scott partook in an opportunity to appear in 72 comedy clubs globally along with several other comics. That year, he broke his foot permanently when he fell off a stage in France. Scott mentioned it was the biggest laugh he earned and took that as a certain sign to retire amidst the applause and adoration.

Scott previously served on the boards of the AIDS Council of NENY, Our Brothers Keeper Foundation, The Names Project, The Capital District Gay and Lesbian Council and the NENY Patient Advocacy League. Scott also was co-facilitator for the Inclusion Project at Jewish Family Services in Albany. He served as an executive assistant to lobbyist and attorney Ross Levi at the Empire State Pride Agenda Foundation during its effort to legalize gay marriage in New York state.

Currently, Scott is working on a stage adaptation of "The Angel Levine" with a few friends. He resides in Guilderland, caring for himself and his mom. He mentioned he'll be 60 on July 1 and said he "DOES NOT want to talk about it." Scott is appreciative to be welcomed back to B'nai Sholom after 25 years of wandering.

When asked why he chose to rejoin B'nai Sholom (he was a member in 1997 and 1998), Scott cited first and foremost our new rabbi, Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot. He praises the congregation for hiring a female rabbi. "The more I hear her teach, the more I can appreciate her leadership," Scott said.

Another factor Scott said is important to him as a gay man is the egalitarian and inclusive nature of B'nai Sholom. Scott says the LGBTQ+ community should support not only synagogues with a majority of LGBTQ+ congregants but also those like B'nai Sholom that are open and accepting.

Would **you** be interested in hosting a
Rosh Hashanah Luncheon on
Monday, September 26, 2022?

L'Shanah Tovah!



Best wishes for a sweet New Year!

**We provide invitations, stamps & assistance coordinating this potluck event.
(Please note that all hosts and guests must be vaccinated against COVID.)**

**Please contact Bettina Stoller
ASAP for more details.**

bfstoller@gmail.com or 518-489-8636

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

B'nai Sholom Receives \$50,000 New York State Grant to Protect Congregation

The Safety and Security Committee is happy to announce that B'nai Sholom applied for and – after a highly competitive process – received a \$50,000 “Securing Communities Against Hate Crimes” grant, administered by the state Division of Criminal Justice Services. The grant provides funds, available from June 1, 2022, to May 31, 2024, to strengthen safety and security measures at our building.

Our approved grant proposal calls for:

- improving lighting in the parking lot and around the building;
- covering all glass surfaces with blast-resistant film; and,
- enhancing our camera system with analytic capability so that we are notified of suspicious events in real time, are able to record for 30 days and can provide coverage of the entire area around the outside of our building.

These projects will greatly improve temple security and, hopefully, help us feel safer when we are at B'nai Sholom.

Important Information About a Change to B'Yachad

Dear B'nai Sholom Congregants,

I am writing to make you aware of a revision to B'Yachad effective for the 2022-23 school year. B'Yachad will change from a collaborative school among Temple Israel, Congregation Ohav Shalom and B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation to a collaboration between Congregation Ohav Shalom and B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation. Both Ohav Shalom and we remain committed to continuing our work together to offer and enhance an enriching and meaningful religious school for our children.

The B'Yachad board, the rabbis and our B'Yachad director will also be reviewing the curriculum and goals of the program to make any necessary updates. We will be working over the next several months to engage interested people in both congregations, especially parents of school-age children or of children who will soon be of school age, to provide us with feedback.

I am very grateful to everyone in the B'nai Sholom community who has supported and encouraged our students, keeping this program thriving during these past two years of the COVID crisis. This has been a very difficult time for everyone involved in B'Yachad, and the school has benefited from having B'nai Sholom's highly engaged parents and B'Yachad board representatives. I am grateful as well to our director, Ruth Malka, and B'Yachad's fantastic teachers, who have worked to provide our children and their families with a wonderful Jewish education. I am excited to be working with a great group of people to maintain our strong collaboration and build a bright future for B'Yachad.

More details to come in the coming weeks, but if you have any questions in the interim, please reach out to me or to Joel Bloom, who will be president of the B'Yachad board for 2022-23, starting in July.

L'shalom,

Julie Novkov, President

A SMALL REQUEST FROM YOUR FRIENDLY BULLETIN EDITORIAL TEAM

WE LOVE YOUR WORDS...WHEN THEY'RE IN WORD. We've been receiving a lot of great articles that have made the monthly Bulletin bigger and better than ever. Please help us by sending your Bulletin submissions in a Word document and not in the body of an email. It will save us the additional steps of converting email text into the Word docs that we use to lay out and assemble each issue. Many thanks!

BE ON GUARD AGAINST EMAIL SPOOFING SCAM.

STAY ALERT! If you see a suspicious email that claims to come from Rabbi Weisbrot or someone else at B'nai Sholom, double-check the email address of the sender – it may be a scam. When in doubt, do not click on any links or attachments and do not reply to the message. Send a fresh email to the correct address for the supposed sender or call them directly to confirm.

The Congregation Notes with Thanks These Contributions:

General Fund

In honor of **Ben and Becky Marvin's 50th Anniversary** by Judy and Roy Fruiterman

In memory of **Ron Royne** by Judy and Roy Fruiterman

In memory of **Herb Swift** by Judy and Roy Fruiterman

In memory of **Ron Royne** by Amy Sternstein

In memory of **my friend, Ron Royne** by Carol Smith

In memory of **Moses Khazam** by Carol Smith

In honor of **Ida Domfort** by Howard and Marcus Domfort

In memory of **Helaine Plaut** by Ben and Becky Marvin

In memory of **Ron Royne** by Ben and Becky Marvin

In memory of **Eli Klausner** by Ethan and Linda Klausner

In memory of **Ron Royne** by Shari Whiting

In memory of **Robert Goody** by Nancy Goody

Endowment Fund

A donation from Richard and Barbara Nussbaum

Vera Propp Books for Babies Fund

In honor of **the birth of Claire Sarah Gordon, Lois Gordon's granddaughter** by Ben and Becky Marvin

In honor of **the birth of Claire Sarah Gordon, Lois Gordon's granddaughter** by Maxine, Eric and Ethan Goldberg

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In memory of **Hanna Aron** by Susan Aron and Joseph DeFronzo

In grateful appreciation for **Rabbi Weisbrot**

The following Yahrzeits will be observed in June:

6/3 Cleone Owen; Joseph Finkelstein*; Rae Spitalnic*; Lena Rosenblatt*; Earl Marvin; Ernst Swiwc; Werner P. Frankel; Julius Golderman; Hal Rosenthal*; Bea Fogel; Harry Weiss; Sam Rauch

6/10 Donald Putterman*; Dr. Hyman Cohen; B. Howard Savitt; Jacob Aronson*; Nathan Hess*; Gertrude Einstein*; Edward Shapiro; Sol Gordon; Dorothy Raderman; Leo Levin; Jack Raderman; Jerome Hoffmann*

6/17 Ronald Kaplan; John Samuels; Dora Edelman; Ralph Owen; Lorena Abrams*; Martin Gilsenberg; Mildy Fischel; Marion Goldstein*

6/24 Gerry Green; Isadore T. Jaffe*; Selma Jarett; Martin Neuburger; Jeannette Lubitch Katz; Jennie Dubb*; Bernard Herbert; Gordon Edelman; Minerva Knee

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

MAZAL TOV!!

...to Leah Cherry and Nick Lennon, who were married on Sunday, May 15.

MAYAN HANDS SEEKS NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Mayan Hands is searching for a skilled and creative leader to serve as our next Executive Director. The ideal candidate should possess both broad business and nonprofit management skills and experience, a passion for social justice, and an entrepreneurial spirit. Spanish language proficiency required. For best consideration, please apply by May 31.

Visit <https://www.mayanhands.org/pages/executive-director-position> for more information.

RABBI: Danielle Weisbrot can be reached at rabiweisbrot@bnaisholom.albany.ny.us

RABBI EMERITUS: Donald P. Cashman

PRESIDENT: Julie Novkov can be reached at julienovkov@hotmail.com

OFFICE MANAGER: Christine Blackman can be reached at christine@bnaisholom.albany.ny.us

BOOKKEEPER: Maryann Wygel can be reached at bookkeeper@bnaisholom.albany.ny.us

OFFICE HOURS: TUE/WED/THURS/FRI 9:30 AM–4:30 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 that the Bulletin is sent out in a timely manner.

<u>Period Covered</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
July 2022.....	June 8
August 2022.....	July 13