

# B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

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MAY 2017

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IYAR/SIVAN 5777

## JOIN US FOR THESE SERVICES AND STUDY SESSIONS

Friday, May 5 Saturday, May 6	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE</b> EXTENDED STUDY: The Writings (Job)	<b>6:00 PM</b> 9:30 AM
Friday, May 12 Saturday, May 13	<b>EREV SHABBAT SERVICE</b> TORAH STUDY: 'Emor Lev. 21.1-24.23	<b>8:00 PM</b> 9:30 AM
Friday, May 19 Saturday, May 20	<b>EREV SHABBAT SERVICE - Longevity Shabbat</b> TORAH STUDY: <i>Be-har-Be-hukkotai</i> Lev. 25.1-27.34	<b>8:00 PM</b> 9:30 AM
Friday, May 26 Saturday, May 27	<b>EREV SHABBAT SERVICE</b> TORAH STUDY: <i>Be-midbar</i> Num. 1.1-4.20	<b>8:00 PM</b> 9:30 AM
Tuesday, May 30	<b>EREV SHAVUOT - Confirmation</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>
Friday, June 2 Saturday, June 3	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE</b> EXTENDED STUDY: The Writings (Job)	<b>6:00 PM</b> 9:30 AM



## CONGREGATIONAL ANNUAL MEETING Tuesday evening, June 13, 2017

*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*

May has always been my favorite month. There's a high probability my bias derives from May being my birthday month. Still, the natural events of spring come to their fullness during May. It warms up, without the stifling heat we'll get during the summer. The palette of flowers moves beyond forsythia yellow and azalea purple. The leaves return to the trees. Snow fall is inconsequential, with an Albany average of 0.1 inch for the month (the record from 1945 is 5.4 inches).

Another reason I like May is for its sense of culmination. Academic years are coming to an end, and the programmatic year of the synagogue winds down. The joy – sometimes relief – at completion is coupled with the eager anticipation of plans made for the time ahead.

The Jewish calendar brings good things, too. **Yom HaAtzma'ut**, celebrating the establishment of the State of Israel, and **Yom Yerushalayim**, commemorating the return to Jewish sovereignty of the ancient city of Jerusalem, both occur in May. Frequently, as in this year, the festival of **Shavuot** occurs in May, and we will celebrate it on Tuesday, May 30, at 7:30 PM.

A highlight of Shavuot this year will be the **Confirmation** ceremony. B'nai Sholom's liberal requirements for Confirmation, which allow for completion of a course of study at the student's own pace via Mifgash, our communal High School program, will bring together 5 of our young people for the ceremony. Noah Degroult-Elias, Asher Novkov-Bloom, Shira Novkov-Bloom, Ben Rethemeyer, and Hugh Smith are our confirmands who will conduct the service, read from the Torah, and speak about the Jewish influences on their lives.

A very different type of event which happens in May, to which all congregants are invited is the **Reform Jewish Voice of New York State Advocacy Day** at the state capitol. Social justice advocates from Reform synagogues throughout New York converge on Albany first to get fired up before heading to the Capitol and the LOB to speak to elected officials, or their legislative aides. Register at <http://rjvnys.org/>, selecting the link underneath my picture. This year focus will be on legislation affecting reproductive rights, public education funding, voting rights, and electoral reform. The RJV staff in Washington will set up appointments for us with our legislators, and there's a better chance if you register by May 1. Our legislators love hearing from the liberal religious denominations; if you are not from the immediate vicinity of B'nai Sholom, your voice might go farther! With things changing in Washington, our state houses become an even more important locus for achieving our goals.

Finally, May is planting season. I could have put in peas, lettuce, cabbage, radishes, and spinach in during April, but I always feel the need to wait till after Passover, at which time the tomatoes can go in. Once the tomatoes are in, the peppers can go in. If you have never raised your own food, I urge you to try. It's a profoundly rewarding endeavor, one that I find brings me closer to the Creator and the intricacies of creation.

L'shalom,

*Rabbi Don Cashman*

# Who Me? An advocate? Can I really do that? Yes! Should I? YES!

The passion for social justice is reflected in the ancient words of our prophets and sages and in the declarations of our Movement's leaders throughout its history. The ancient command "Tzedek, Tzedek Tirdof! Justice, justice shall you seek!" constantly reverberates in our ears. It has become deeply embedded in the Reform Jewish psyche. This charge has led to a long and proud tradition of political activism by the Reform Movement.<sup>1</sup> And it is the focus of our Social Action Committee's (SAC's) efforts for the coming year.

Due to the demands of publishing deadlines, this article is being written before our Social Action Shabbat service (April 28) where a speaker from the New York Civil Liberties Union (NYCLU – a branch of the ACLU) taught us about the mechanics of advocacy (how, when, where, etc.). Excerpts from his talk will be in next month's bulletin. But the first step to becoming an advocate is to become informed.

Joining B'nai Sholom (or any Reform congregation) does not mean one subscribes to a particular political perspective. Yet, our diversity need not deter us from fulfilling our prophetic mandate. Reaching well-reasoned positions informed by current information and our Reform Jewish values allows us to speak truth to power in pursuit of justice. That is the goal of the SAC programming for the year – to give us all the knowledge needed to be an effective advocate for justice this year and beyond.

So, to kick off that effort, here are some great resources to become informed on many of the social justice issues of the day. There are many other resources – the Social Action Committee will try to highlight various issues throughout the coming year in articles and activities to empower you to take action individually or with a group.

<http://rac.org/advocacy-activism> - The Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism

Learn about key social justice issues through a Reform Jewish and moral lens. Dozens of articles on the top national and international issues of the day, including: Economic Justice, Environment, Civil Rights, Immigration, Women's Rights, and many more. And lots of links to more resources on each topic.

<https://www.nyclu.org/> - The New York Civil Liberties Union

Articles and detailed information on current New York State-specific issues particularly as they relate to the constitution and the criminal justice system. Links to specific actions and efforts underway by various groups.

<http://www.lwvny.org/> - The League of Women Voters of New York State

Lots of state and local government information, particularly related to election law, but also articles on Ethics and Lobbying, Health Care, Education, and many other issues. There are local leagues (with lots of local events) throughout the state including county chapters in every county in the Capital District.

Stay tuned for many more advocacy resources and events throughout the year from the SAC.

<sup>1</sup> This is an excerpt from the Advocacy & Activism page of the rac.org web site. Pieces of that page are also incorporated elsewhere in this article.



We're having another coffeehouse Saturday, May 6th starting at 7 p.m. in B'nai Sholom's Social Hall!

Once again, hosted by Phil Teumim, Will Vail and Jeff Klamka. Come to our Bet Kafeh (coffeehouse) for an evening of music, stories, poems and overall great entertainment.

You are welcome to come and listen or sign up to perform. Sing a song, recite some poetry, tell a story, whatever you like!

Coffee and refreshments will be served. Donations accepted and encouraged. Hope to see you there!

Questions? Send to Carol Smith at [csmith1161@gmail.com](mailto:csmith1161@gmail.com)



## LONGEVITY SHABBAT & POTLUCK DINNER



By now, our Chai-Plus members have received invitations to this May 19<sup>th</sup> event. The Member Events Committee reminds you to rsvp to Liz Gingrich at 456-3366 or [fiddlinliz7@gmail.com](mailto:fiddlinliz7@gmail.com) by May 5<sup>th</sup>.

Although all are contributing to the meal, and bringing their own beverages and place settings, we still need you to let us know if you plan to come so that we will have adequate seating. Gift bags will be given out at the dinner instead of the service, and we may have a group activity at the dinner as well.

We look forward to seeing as many of our long-term members at this special evening as possible, and – of course – any other congregants who wish to attend.

## It's Time To Clean Out Your Closet!



Once again we are collecting summer clothing for donation to those in need in our region. We will collect CLEAN, GENTLY USED clothes and shoes. Please be sure to SORT TWICE: BY GENDER (male/female/unisex) AND ALSO BY AGE (infant/child/teen/adult). **Be sure to label your bags.**

You may drop off your donations at the synagogue during the week of May 22 through June 2 during office hours or when you come to meetings and services. Please place them neatly in the small committee room (next to the prayer book shelf) in the main hallway.

**SAVE THE DATE!**  
**A B'nai Sholom Night of Baseball!**  
*Sponsored by the Member Events Committee*

**Sunday, August 20**

 vs. 

Tri-City Valley Cats vs Brooklyn Cyclones  
 Dinner: 4:15-5:15PM | Game Time: 5PM  
**Celebrate Jewish Heritage Night with the ValleyCats**

*Kid Activities include: Read with the players and play catch on the field before the game and run the bases after the game*

Tickets will include dinner & game seats.  
**Look for details and RSVP info in the June Bulletin.**  
 Any questions, please contact  
 Hana Sullenger at 542-7863 or hszima@yahoo.com

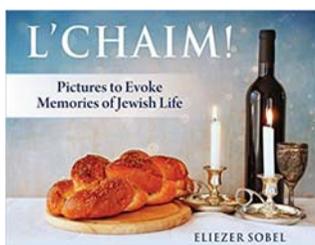
## Changes in Board of Trustees

Joel Bloom, a long time member of the Board of Trustees and secretary of the Board, has assumed a new job which will take him out of the area during the week. As a result, he has resigned his position on the board. Josh Brody has agreed to serve as Board secretary. In accordance with the by-laws, the board appointed Roy Fruiterman to fill Joel's position until the next annual meeting. We wish Joel good luck in his new position and thank Josh and Roy for taking on these new responsibilities.

## *New in the library!*

### L'Chaim!

### Pictures to Evoke Memories of Jewish Life



In spending time with his mother in the advanced stages of Alzheimer's disease, author Eliezer Sobel recognized something astounding: Although she had seemingly lost all of her language skills several years earlier, she still enjoyed gazing at pictures in magazines, and she actually read the headlines aloud! He searched for a simple picture book with easy-to-read captions in big print, but learned that while there are over twenty thousand books designed for caregivers, there are virtually no books written for patients with dementia.

*L'Chaim: Pictures to Evoke Memories of Jewish Life* was created specifically for Jewish elders who suffer from some form of memory loss. Pictures and captions stimulate the recollection of past events and provide tender moments of connection between caregivers and loved ones.

Of course, we hope you never need a book like this.

*Text provided by the publisher, Rainbow Ridge.*

## YOBS Creative Service

This year's YOBS Creative Service on Friday, March 24 was a major success. We made it holiday themed. We went through all of the Jewish holidays and all of the prayers in our service and found that they aligned perfectly. Before each prayer, a YOBSer explained to the congregation how the next holiday in line matched up with the succeeding prayer. After going through a prayer, we then taped the name of the prayer and the name of the holiday onto the arc. This showed everyone the sequence of both the holidays in the year and prayers in the Shabbat service. However, the main highlight of the night was the music by Max Suib and Ben Klamka. These two virtuosos lead us in YOBS' favorite song, "Shofar Blast", as both the opening and closing songs. This represented the cycle starting with Rosh Hashanah and going through all of the holidays, repeating the cycle again. During the prayers, Max, with his guitar, introduced the congregation to some camp tunes and Ben was able to play some B'nai Sholom "classics" on the piano. The creativity and musicality of YOBS made the service very original, interesting, and at times, entertaining. It was certainly a night to remember.

## Chocolate Seder

The annual YOBS Chocolate Seder on April 2 was as delicious as ever. We were able to find different candies and chocolates that represented everything one might have on the family seder table. The whole seder was anyone's dessert dream, and at the same time, it was educational. Like any other seder, we went through the story of Passover and learned about it, but we also discussed different Passover traditions practiced all around the world. In addition to eating sweets, we wore masks to represent the ten plagues and engaged in a fiercely competitive afikoman hunt. The Chocolate Seder provided a great way for families to spend time together. Additionally, it gave YOBS a chance to engage more with younger children, and it definitely served as a fun event for people of all ages.

## Assemblywoman Nily Rozic Comes To B'nai Sholom

On Monday night, April 3, B'nai Sholom hosted Nily Rozic who talked to us about being the youngest woman ever elected to the New York State Assembly as well as being a Sabbath observant Jew. Nily detailed her fascinating biography being born in Jerusalem to Argentinian parents who made aliyah, moving to Queens as a young girl and inspired by a high school teacher became involved in politics and at 27 was elected to the Assembly. She also pointed out that her first name is an acronym of a biblical phrase (Netzakh Yisrael Lo Yishaker — The Eternity (God) of Israel will not lie: I Samuel 15:29), and was the name of a Jewish espionage network in Palestine during World War I. Nily shared insights of her time in the legislature and the challenges being female, progressive and a Latina Jew committed to Israel, all while representing a Queens district that is 50% Asian-American. Those attending certainly received a lesson in civics from a unique perspective.

## The following Yahrzeits will be observed in May.

- 5/5 Hyman Ikler; Samuel Bach\*; Anna Liff\*; Louis Samuel Harris; Bernard Earl Shanks; Sophie Goldstein\*; Gertrude Sperber\*
- 5/12 Gordan Goldstein; Mel Lee; Minnie Velk\*; Dorothy Lazoroff\*; Glory Swartz; Alan Berke\*; Louis Rosenblatt\*; Herbert Horowitz; Hyman Tress; Meyer Pogoda
- 5/19 Edgar Altmayer; Henry Kramer; Renee Stoller; Meyer Tabak; Marvin Kerper; Elaine H. Neuburger
- 5/26 George Singer\*; Frances F. Lazoroff Dobris\*; Rose Rogers Singer\*; Hyman W. Zima\*; Kenneth Rockefeller; Dorothy Parnes; Lillian Raskin Kuperman\*; Vera Walker\*; Sol Goldstein\* Dorothy Raderman; Jack Raderman

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

## THE CONGREGATION NOTES WITH THANKS THESE CONTRIBUTIONS...

### General Fund

In memory of **Lieselotte Weiner** by Herb and Ruth Swift.  
In honor of **Ann Shapiro and Barry Pendergrass** by Robin Belansky.  
In memory of **Sidney Devore** by Barbara and Jack Devore.  
In memory of **Glory Swartz** by Barbara and Jack Devore.  
In memory of **David Fiks** by Howard, Bettina and Jeremy Stoller.  
In memory of **Renee Stoller** by Howard, Bettina and Jeremy Stoller.  
In memory of **Irma Schwartzman** by Mindy Kramer.  
In memory of **Judy Reeder** by Mark and Cheryl Reeder.  
In memory of **Herbert Horowitz** by Barney, Sheyna and Abby Horowitz.

### Social Action Fund

In memory of **Rebecca Miller Shultz** by Ben and Becky Marvin.  
In honor of **Barbara and Richard Nussbaum's granddaughter Rebecca Betsy** by Larry and Gail Volk.

### Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In honor of **Tevye the Milkman's course** by Deb Adler.

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

**Thank you!**

to the following congregants who recently hosted an Oneg Shabbat: YOBS families, Pam Strassberg and Albert Cromling, Sharona Wachs, Nancy and David Rudinger, Edith and Bruce Goldstein, Gary and Melissa Putterman Hoffmann and the Social Action Committee.

to the Bulletin Brigade who helped fold, insert and stuff envelopes to get the April bulletin out: Joan Savitt, Rema Goldstein, Marilyn and Richard Strassberg, Anne Hausgaard and Cheryl Reeder.

# MAZAL TOV

.....to JJ Frasca, son of Ann Lowenfels, on his marriage to Puja Kenia.

.....to Barbara and Richard Nussbaum’s daughter Liz Nussbaum Albright and daughter-in-law Laura Albright had a baby girl Rebecca Betsy Albright on March 21.

.....to Phoebe Morse, daughter of Brenda Hazard and Steve Morse, will receive the Lenore Bellin Memorial Award at the Albany JCC's Pillars of the Community award event on April 30.

.....to Byrgen Finkelman on receiving the 2017 New York State Bar Association President's Pro Bono Service Award for the Third Judicial District for extraordinary pro bono service.

.....to Joel Bloom who has accepted a new position as Senior Director of Accreditation and Assessment at Long Island University. His family will still be based in the Capital Region, but Joel will be working downstate during the week.

.....to Julie Novkov who has been named a Collins Fellow at the University of Albany. This award to faculty members is bestowed on exemplars of the highest levels of institutional commitment and service.

## *In the Community...*

The **Ne’imah Jewish Community Chorus** will celebrate its **25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Concert,** “**Sterling Sounds,**” with guest artist Cantor Meir Finkelstein on Sunday, June 11, 2017 at 7:00 pm at the Massry Center for the Arts on the Campus of the College of St. Rose, Albany, NY. A reception will follow the concert. Parking will be available. General Admission \$15, Seniors and Students \$10. Tickets will be available at the door or by calling 438-9561, or by email at [neimahchorus@gmail.com](mailto:neimahchorus@gmail.com)



- 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.**

<u>Period Covered</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
June.....	May 10
July.....	June 14

*Articles and news received after deadline are subject to omission.*