

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

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MAY 2020

IYAR/SIVAN 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

For all May Shabbat services, Zoom links are sent out weekly.

If you do not receive our weekly emails, please ask to be added. Please call the office for information about telephone access to the services.

Friday, May 1	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	6:00 PM
Saturday, May 2	TORAH STUDY	9:30 AM
Friday, May 8	TOT SHABBAT	5:30 PM
	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Saturday, May 9	TORAH STUDY	9:30 AM
Friday, May 15	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Saturday, May 16	TORAH STUDY	9:30 AM
Friday, May 22	EREV SHABBAT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Saturday, May 23	TORAH STUDY	9:30 AM
Thursday, May 28	KABBALAT YOM TOV	8:00 PM
	Let's join together for a brief welcome to the Festival of Shavuot	
Friday, May 29	Your Home is Mount Sinai: A Shavuot Celebration	8:00 PM
	We'll celebrate the Festival of Revelation with song, stories, and study in the style of <i>Tikkun Leil Shavuot</i> , a kabbalistic late night session (but we're not going all night). Cheesecake, blintzes, ice cream, and beverages recommended.	
Saturday, May 30	TORAH STUDY	9:30 AM
Friday, June 1	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	6:00 PM
Saturday, June 2	TORAH STUDY	9:30 AM

B'nai Sholom's Annual Meeting Rescheduled

The annual meeting originally scheduled for Thursday, May 21, has been rescheduled to Thursday, June 18. Pizza and salad, provided by the Board, will be at 6:30 p.m. The annual meeting will begin at 7 p.m.

From our Rabbi....

No one could have imagined that Passover would be like this. Even a month before at Purim, when the sanctuary seemed just a little less full than expected, we could not have conceived of the Passover seder as an individualized, in-house experience. Well, maybe not so individualized: the seder for many was a shared effort, using Zoom, FaceTime, or some other Internet-based audio-visual method. People chose to have their seder with family and friends in remote locations. My in-laws in Jerusalem and Tel Aviv, seven times zones away, had the Philadelphia-based family as guests; the Los Angeles branch dropped in for a while, and we were invited for a quick hello. This, of course, was many hours before it was actually holiday time here. Because of the unique situation, people took advantage of the available tools to have a seder that included more than those who were sharing quarters under quarantine. Others participated in a streaming seder, one that was live but didn't include group participation. Still others tapped into pre-recorded s'darim.

The Seder of the Far-Flung may very well be a lasting manifestation of this whole distressing coronavirus ordeal. Now that we can be virtually present without being actually present, we will likely see more people choosing to skip the drive, skip the traffic, or skip the plane flight to join in family s'darim. Or, perhaps attending in person was never going to be possible, but these methods bring some semblance of togetherness. There's also the possibility of attending more than one seder in a night, or visiting different places over the two nights without travel.

I can't help but think, though, that these virtual experiences, where your loved one appears as a tiny picture on a screen, fail to bring the warmth and love of a real-life holiday encounter. Moreover, if you go somewhere, there will probably be more food than you would have cooked for yourself!

We acknowledge that this is *sha'at ha-d'hak*, a time of pressing need, i.e. an emergency. We made special allowances to do some things we wouldn't usually do, or to not do some of the usual things. While I was not able to hold my usual s'darim, where we host 40-45 over the two nights, I did have all my children in attendance, since they'd been quarantining for 3 or more weeks prior. It was sad not to have everyone, but I felt lucky to have the kids with us.

The last ritual item before the seder dinner is Koreich - the Hillel Sandwich of haroset and bitter herbs on matza. While holding it in our hand, we say "*Zecher l'mikdash k'Hillel* - A remembrance of the Temple according to Hillel." In our house, we use that locution "*Zecher l' - a remembrance of*" to signify that something is *not quite* the real thing. I think a Zoom seder, outside a *sha'at ha-d'hak*, might end up feeling like *Zecher l'seder*- a remembrance of the seder, and not the real experience. Yet I understand all the reasons why it could be a logical and workable alternative into the future.

I never expected to end after 37 years my rabbinic career years as a practitioner in the Temple of Zoom. There's a certain joy, though, being a part of something that's new, and being endorsed by our special circumstances. I just hope these circumstances go away soon, and we can all be together live, in-person.

L'shalom,

Rabbi Don Cashman

Shalom, Rabbi Cashman!



A Celebratory Weekend

Honoring

Rabbi Donald P. Cashman

on the occasion of his retirement

after 35 years as our rabbi

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

UPDATE DUE TO COVID-19:

Farewell Erev Shabbat Service

Friday, June 12, 2020

Zoom or In Person, as Circumstances Permit

Festive Oneg (In Person or Virtual)

Brunch

Originally Sunday, June 14, 2020

POSTPONED - NEW DATE TBA

Check Online for Updates & Giving Opportunities

SOCIAL ACTION/SOCIAL JUSTICE

B'nai Sholom is a *Brit Olam* congregation

B'nai Sholom is a support congregation for Family Promise of the Capital Region and as such, we are sharing a letter from the Family Promise Executive Director. If you are looking for ways to help our community during these difficult times, Family Promise is an excellent program deserving of your generosity.

Dear Coordinators, Volunteers and Supporters of Family Promise,

Our mission continues as **COVID-19** has changed our way of life. A few days before it was known that the virus had reached New York State, one of our guest families moved into their apartment. We were so happy and eager to see them settled and to open the program to a new family. Then it hit. As the recommendations on social distancing became known and the orders from the Governor's Office were issued, we changed gears each step of the way. Our two present guest families are sheltering in place at our Day Center and we are "door-step dropping" needed items to our graduated families and those who seek our help.

There are more than 200 Family Promise affiliates in the United States. Our mission to provide shelter for homeless families is the same, yet our way of raising funds to carry out our mission varies. Our affiliate does not accept government funding and we are the only local family shelter that does not have a contract with the Department of Social Services (DSS). This simply means we are not paid by the government to shelter families. We also do not charge our guest families who have income for our services. Contracted shelters are required to charge families with income in order to reimburse DSS. Our decision not to seek to be a contracted shelter allows us to help all families that meet our eligibility, and frequently we help the families that have been turned away by DSS. This happens often when a family can't provide documents to prove their homelessness such as an eviction letter or a termination letter from an employer. We have also served families who were told they would be separated in order to receive shelter.

In recent weeks, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we have received emails and calls from volunteers and supporters offering assistance. We are very grateful to so many of you who have spontaneously called and dropped off needed items or made a donation. The truth is nobody knows how long this pandemic will last and the financial implications it will have on our mission.

We will not be having our annual fundraiser at Glennpeter Diamond Centre, and it is likely that we will not have our spring benefit concert. The proceeds of both events support our Family Assistance Fund, which is used to cover the unmet needs of our current families, graduated families and those on the verge of homelessness. If you would like to offer a donation to offset the loss of income for the Family Assistance Fund, please consider using the below to our website. I have also included a list of items that can be dropped off at the back door of our Day Center during daylight hours. If you are dropping off items, please park in the Bethany Reformed Church lot. The Day Center is the brick house with the big white van in the driveway and is on the opposite side of the church near the parking lot exit sign. Look for the big blue clothing donation bins, which are near the slate walkway behind the house that leads to the back door.

How can you help Family Promise of the Capital Region?

Here are some examples of what your donation can do:

\$15 = a large supply of paper towels \$50 = One month supply of size 6 diapers

\$100 = basic groceries for a family of four for one week

Approximately \$500 = 1/2 of the monthly rent for a family with reduced income

Monetary donations and gift cards to grocery stores can be mailed to:

Family Promise of the Capital Region

738 New Scotland Ave., Albany, NY 12208

Online donations can be made using this link:

<https://www.familypromisecr.org/donate/>

List of needed items that be dropped off at the back door of our Day Center at 738 New Scotland Ave., Albany:

*The items with a * are more urgently needed. We have three families that use size 6 diapers.*

*Size 6 Diapers

*Cleaning supplies

Paper towels

Antibacterial wipes

Shampoo and Conditioner

Body Wash

Sponges

Laundry soap

For those of you not leaving your home but would like to donate a specific item, feel free to order from this [Amazon Wish List](#). Some of the items are out of stock, but as the items become available they will be mailed to the Day Center. If you are not comfortable ordering from Amazon, but would like to have an item mailed here, please feel free to choose another retailer. Family Promise of the Capital Region is a charity listed with AmazonSmile. If you register with AmazonSmile and select Family Promise of the Capital Region as your chosen charity, Amazon will deposit a donation into our bank account.

As we move forward together and adjust accordingly to remain safe, I wish to thank everyone who supports our mission. It seems to me that help provided person-to-person is the key to coming out of this pandemic as a stronger community. On behalf of the families we serve and our board of directors, I wish you all continued good health.

With Gratitude,
Mary

Mary Giordano
Executive Director
Family Promise of the Capital Region
518-650-8895
www.familypromisecr.org

Doing Mitzvah at Home: T-shirt Totes

Food pantries and other food and meal sites are in need of reusable, washable tote bags. Making no-sew bags from recycled T-shirts was the project that B'nai Sholom was leading at the (now cancelled) Mitzvah Day.

BUT...

...since we already have the shirts, we can still proceed with this project and do a mitzvah at home.

Becky Marvin has bundles of washed and clean shirts along with links to online instructions. These bundles are available for pick-up from her front porch at 72 Delmar Pl., Delmar. If you would like to swing by and grab a bundle, please email Becky beckymarvin4574@gmail.com. When you are done, you can leave the bundle back on the porch. Becky will wash the totes again and deliver them to sites in need.

Eight bundles of shirts have already been completed, and what they lacked in beauty they made up for with utility, cleanliness and sustainability. **THANK YOU** to all the folks who cut and tied and made our first round of bags. They were delivered to the South End Children's Café and are being used for donated groceries that the Café is distributing to needy families.

Here are links to instructions:

<https://mommypotamus.com/no-sew-t-shirt-tote-bag-tutorial/>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zgpaM3u2zng>

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Cin_wLIW9S8

N.B. Tie the second row of knots as tight as possible!

Be a Mitzvah Maven and pick up a bundle!

B'nai Sholom Hosts Its First Tot Seder

Families of the B'nai Sholom community logged into Zoom from eight different computers to participate in B'nai Sholom's first Tot Seder, designed specifically for children ages 2-5. The program was put together by Libby Liebschutz and Laura Kaplan, initially to be held live at the temple with everyone gathered around a traditional seder meal. In the era of social distancing, the program was revamped to be conducted virtually.

"I was thrilled that so many of our Tot Shabbat families were willing to participate via computer," said Libby, "and that the program worked so well in virtual mode." Following along with copies of *Sammy Spider's First Haggadah*, which had been delivered or mailed to everyone, the participating families read the story, sang traditional songs, and ate matzah and other ritual foods. President Barbara Devore welcomed all the families and read an opening passage from the haggadah. She felt the format worked well, even though the timing lag on Zoom requires everyone to be muted when reciting or singing together. "I was exaggerating my movements to make clear I was singing robustly from home," she said. "I could see that many of the children were very engaged as we went through the program."

Feedback from the families has been positive. Based on the success of the event, B'nai Sholom will offer Tot Shabbat virtually in its regular second Friday of the month time slot. And perhaps next year, if not in Jerusalem, we will at least be able to be on Whitehall Road!

From The Member Events Committee...

The Member Events Committee hopes that this finds everyone doing as well as they can during this challenging time. We're sorry to have had to postpone (until next fall or possibly next spring) the Volunteer Dinner/Shabbat scheduled for May 15th. This is always an enjoyable event, as B'nai Sholom volunteers and their families gather to celebrate themselves and each other. Our inability to thank them in-person at this time does not diminish B'nai Sholom's appreciation for what our volunteers contribute.

Once we can say with some certainty that the Rosh Hashanah luncheons will happen, we will start planning for them, knowing how popular they've been and how gratifying we've all found it to salute the new year along with fellow congregants and friends. In the meantime, our committee hopes that everyone stays safe and healthy and hopes to see all of you soon.

Rabbinic Search Update

The Search Committee identified an appropriate candidate for interim rabbi in March and presented a hiring recommendation to the Board of Trustees in April. Negotiations with this candidate are in process and will likely be resolved soon. Meanwhile, the Search Committee continues to receive and review new applications for the position. At the same time, findings from January's Group Conversations are being summarized and will be presented to the entire congregation at the Annual Meeting.

As always, you can stay up-to-date on the search through the monthly Bulletin, the B'nai Sholom website and the weekly email announcements. Any questions about hiring the interim rabbi or the search process should be directed to the committee co-chairs, David Liebschutz and Ann Lowenfels.

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

Why We Go to Services **By Phil Teumim**

Sometimes we go for the insight
To hear the rabbi discuss
Modern reflections and ancient connections
With something much bigger than us

Sometimes we go for the learning
We pray and we bless the challah
A little to eat, then we retreat
To hear a synagogue scholar

Sometimes we go to remember
Say Kaddish for someone who's gone
We cherish their ways, we honor their days
Their presence among us lives on

Sometimes we go for the music
Tunes both classic and new
Some interchanged, some rearranged
Still, the same message comes through

Sometimes we go when we're empty
To fill up with prayer and song
Sometimes we don't even know why we go
But we know it's where we belong

Yes each of us has his own reasons
Each has her story to tell
Renew the soul, keep ourselves whole
That's the water we draw from the well

The following Yahrzeits will be observed in May:

5/1 Lieselotte Weiner; Cecelia Zimmelman*; Fay Levinn; George Rudinger; Hyman Ikler; Bernard Earl Shanks; Sophie Goldstein*; Gertrude Sperber

5/8 Samuel Bach*; Anna Liff*; Louis Samuel Harris; Gordan Goldstein; Mel Lee; Claire Roth

5/15 Minnie Velk*; Dorothy Lazoroff*; Glory Swartz; Hanna Aron; Alan Berke*; Louis Rosenblatt*; Herbert Horowitz; Hyman Tress; Edgar Altmayer; Henry Kramer; Renee Stoller

5/22 Meyer Tabak; Ida Domfort*; Marvin Kerper; Elaine H. Neuburger; George Singer*; Frances F. Lazoroff Dobris*; Sol Goldstein*; Harry Weiss

5/29 Rose Rogers Singer*; Hyman W Zima*; Dorothy Parnes; Lillian Raskin Kuperman*; Vera Walker*; Robert Goody; Morris Friedman; Philip Haas; Cleone Owen; Joseph Finkelstein*; Rae Spitalnic; Dorothy Raderman; Sam Rauch; Jack Raderman

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

THE CONGREGATION NOTES WITH THANKS THESE CONTRIBUTIONS

General Fund

In memory of **Judy and Caleb Reeder** by Mark and Cheryl Reeder.

In honor of **Libby Liebschutz** by Sarah Liebschutz.

In memory of **Rhoda Davis** by Ellie and Randy Davis.

In memory of **Helen Goody** by Nancy Goody.

In memory of **David Fiks** by Howie and Bettina Stoller.

In memory of **Irma Schwartzman** by Mindy Kramer.

In memory of **Sidney Devore** by Barbara and Jack Devore.

Books for Babies Fund

In honor of **the birth of Theo David Newton, grandson of Mark and Cheryl Reeder** by Becky and Ben Marvin.

In honor of **the birth of Connor Michael Brody and Lucas Alexander Brody to Megan and Josh Brody** by Becky and Ben Marvin

Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

In memory of **Paul and Richard Rosenthal** by Mari Vosburgh.
Deborah Adler

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.

Life is filled with challenges.
JFS can help.



JFS provides a continuum of supportive services for children, teens, adults, families and seniors, including:

- Counseling for anxiety, depression or grief & more
- Home visits and assessments for seniors
- Transportation for Jewish seniors

Contact us to learn more:

518-482-8856
jfsneny.org



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

*Mazel
to
you!*

.....to Julie Novkov, recipient of the 2020 Torch Award, Celebrating Transformational Undergraduate Teaching and Outstanding Faculty & Student Engagement, at the University at Albany.

*Thank
You!*

.....to the Bulletin Brigade who helped fold, insert and stuff envelopes to get the April Bulletin out: Joan and Jim Savitt.

RABBI: Donald P. Cashman

PRESIDENT: Barbara Devore

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>
June.....	May 13
July.....	June 10