

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

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SEPTEMBER 2021

Phone: 518-482-5283
Visit us at <http://www.bnaisholomalbany.org>
ELUL 5781/TISHREI 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, September 3	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	6:13 PM
Saturday, September 4	EXTENDED STUDY	10:00 AM
Monday, September 6	EREV ROSH HASHANAH SERVICE	7:30 PM
Tuesday, September 7	ROSH HASHANAH MORNING SERVICE	10:00 AM
	PJ LIBRARY TASHLICH	4:30 PM
	COMMUNITY TASHLICH	5:30 PM
	BUCKINGHAM LAKE PARK	
Friday, September 10	TOT SHABBAT SERVICE	5:00 PM
	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	6:13 PM
Saturday, September 11	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Wednesday, September 15	EREV YOM KIPPUR SERVICE	7:30 PM
Thursday, September 16	YOM KIPPUR MORNING SERVICE	10:00 AM
	STUDY SESSION WITH DAVID LIEBSCHUTZ	1:30-3:00 PM
	HEALING SERVICE	4:00 PM
	AFTERNOON SERVICE, YIZKOR & NEILAH	4:45 -7:30 pm (approx.)
Friday, September 17	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:30 PM
Saturday, September 18	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, September 24	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:30 PM
Saturday, September 25	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Monday, September 27	EREV SIMCHAT TORAH	7:30 PM
Friday, October 1	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	6:13 PM
Saturday, October 2	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM

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

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...

Shalom, B'nai Sholom!

A few years ago, I was asked to settle a Jewish debate. One person insisted that the specific deadline for apologies and repenting was Yom Kippur, and the other was sure that you could address those issues all year long. The answer, of course, is that they're both right.

The Jewish calendar and the majority of our High Holy Day liturgy point to Yom Kippur being the deadline for mending fences, making restitution, and doing the work of *t'shuvah* – (re)turning to our best selves. Ideally, we spend the month of Elul doing the work of *cheshbon hanefesh* – taking an accounting of our actions over the course of the past year. At our S'lichot service, we are reminded that Rosh Hashanah is just days away and call ourselves to task. We ask that we be inscribed and sealed for a good year. And the final service of Yom Kippur is called Ne'ilah – locking – when we imagine the gates of repentance close for the season.

But. We can also call to our aid a plethora of other sources in the Jewish canon that refute this concept. One tradition says that we have through Sukkot. The very same Yom Kippur liturgy that implies a strict timeline also provides its antithesis: We address God as “difficult to anger, easy to appease, for You do not wish the death of [sinners] but that they turn from their path and live. Until the day of their death You wait for them; if they (re)turn, You accept them immediately.” Similarly, even as we imagine the gates closing, we ask for them to stay open: “Open a gate for us when the gates are being closed” (Mishkan HaNefesh, Yom Kippur, pg. 613). And if you participate in a regular weekday service (i.e. not Shabbat or a holiday), you'll notice that the Amidah – the central core of the service – has a different and much longer middle section, which includes a prayer for forgiveness for our sins. Three times a day, six days a week our liturgy prompts us to ask God for mercy and hopefully inspires us to do the same by all of the friends, family, colleagues and acquaintances that we may have wronged.

In reality, we generally know we're *supposed* to do the right thing, but it's often too easy to put it off. The apology note you keep meaning to write gets perpetually postponed. The \$20 you owe your friend from that dinner a few months ago waits for “the next time I see her.” That new healthy diet you promised yourself you'd try will *definitely* start on Monday... one of these weeks. The High Holy Days create a sense of urgency to settle all our debts, both financial and personal. Without the alarm clock – the perceived threat of the gates locking shut at the end of Yom Kippur – we might never get around to claiming the biggest perk of the season: a fresh, unburdened start to the new year.

So, when it comes to making (and accepting) apologies, repaying debts, fulfilling your resolutions and repairing relationships, don't worry; you've got plenty of time. But also, hurry up!

Wishing you all a *Shanah Tovah u'Metukah* – a good and sweet new year!

L'shalom,

Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot

FROM OUR PRESIDENT...

Judaism can be a little bit perverse. We start our days as the sun sets. In the winter when the days are shortest, we celebrate the Festival of Lights. And we observe the new year at least three different times (Rosh Hashanah, Tu B'Shvat for the trees, and the beginning of Pesach), none of which coincides with the secular new year.

Of these new years, Rosh Hashanah is the closest in meaning to the secular new year, as it marks the time when the Jewish year changes over numerically. But rather than looking forward and focusing on resolutions to improve ourselves, often related to our physical health (as anyone who's ever worked out at Planet Fitness in January knows), we look back on the year that has passed. We listen to the shofar blasts with joy, but our liturgy encourages us to remember and regret the wrongs that we have done. Further, we are encouraged not just to regret, but also to atone for these wrongs by repairing the damage we have done if this is possible.

Unlike the secular new year as well, we enter the Days of Awe with awareness of our actions as a community rather than just engaging in individual introspection. One of the traditional Torah readings on Yom Kippur (Leviticus 16) recounts the sacrificial progression that the High Priest follows: first for himself and his family, then for the priestly clan and finally for the people of Israel. Herein lies an important insight. While we can and should take individual actions to acknowledge the wrongs we have committed, we should not ignore or set aside the wrongs created collectively, nor should we focus our repair work solely on the things that we can and should do individually.

Over the course of the last year, I have written about racial wrongs, focusing primarily upon the present. These wrongs, however, go beyond individual acts of racism and extend into the past to a time long before any of us was born. Yet we see the legacy of these wrongs in contemporary politics, economics and society: people of color and particularly African Americans still struggle to exercise the right to vote on an equal basis, experience serious inequities in educational resources and suffer from generationally passed-on differences in family wealth. Many of these inequities trace back clearly to state and federal policies that actively benefited and lifted up some of our ancestors. The examples are myriad. Many Americans are familiar with the racialized benefits that the GI Bill provided and how the practice of redlining in real estate sapped Black wealth accumulation in the 20th century. Not so well known is the aggressive extension of American citizenship to immigrants who served in World War I – but which was denied on racial grounds to Asian immigrants who served, with longstanding repercussions for these men and their families.

More recently, however, as a society we have engaged in another wrong, the wrong we are doing to ourselves, our children and their descendants. Recently, I have spent a lot of time thinking about the report issued by the UN's Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, issued very fittingly on the first of Elul. This report provides a frightening future vision that anticipates global warming of 1.5 degrees Celsius, a threshold that, if we do not change collectively, many of us will see in our lifetimes.

The 1.5 degree barrier is significant. We are already living with the impacts of climate change, to which our friends in areas hammered by deadly heat waves, massive fires and catastrophic storm surges from "100-year events" in the last few years can readily testify. At 1.5 degrees of warming, the impacts will be far more devastating. Coastal areas will flood, mass extinctions will occur, the frequency of extreme climate events like storms, fires and heat waves will increase and the scope of worldwide human misery will equal or exceed most events in living memory.

(Continued on page 4.)

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The report is good fodder for reflection during Elul. By 2017, warming from human activities had reached about a full degree Celsius and the pace of warming has increased in the last decade. While our parents and grandparents contributed to the problem, quite a lot of it, collectively, belongs to us. Like the High Priest, we can accept responsibility on multiple levels. Individually, many of us don't do as much as we could or should to reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. Our extended community and family networks likewise bear some responsibility. But much of the responsibility lies with nations and international organizations that have not been assertive enough to rein in the emission of greenhouse gases. In 2019, the EPA identified the top three sources of greenhouse gas emissions in the United States as transportation (29%), electricity production (25%) and industry (23%), all of which require both individual and collective action to address. Our individual choices to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and to support industries and companies that limit emissions are important, but without action by We the People, bigger changes won't occur.

As we move through the High Holy Days and think about these wrongs, we may feel small and impotent as we feel the sorrow of encountering the legacies of the bad choices that we and our ancestors have made. Changing the world for the better is a tall order, especially when it entails changing the way you live and think and trying to assume some responsibility for the weight of these wrongs.

We should keep in mind, however, all that we have learned since the beginning of the pandemic. Many of us saw our lifestyles change drastically, and even without necessarily making conscious choices, we consumed less and traveled less. We also experienced – and many of us participated in – movements for racial justice. We masked, we distanced, we stood in line for vaccines, many of us more for the vulnerable people in our communities and lives than for ourselves. We took the time to think and reflect on the world as it is and the world that we want to have, not in an imagined afterlife, but here and now.

Perhaps the best message that we can take as we think about these urgent concerns in the context of all that we have experienced recently is that we *can* change, learn and grow, and that it's far easier to do this together. Many of us – especially those of us at B'nai Sholom! – can and will choose to live our lives differently for the benefit of others, and to protect others. For me, this makes for a hopeful standpoint from which to think about what we can do in the coming year so that next year, on Rosh Hashanah, we can celebrate the rebirth of a slightly better world.

L'shalom,

Julie Novkov

From the Reopening Task Force: Updated COVID Policy

The Reopening Task Force's goal is to protect the health and safety of all congregants, staff and visitors to the synagogue. In light of rising COVID cases in our region and new information regarding the prevalence and transmissibility of the delta variant, B'nai Sholom changed its COVID policy on August 1. The current policy is:

Anyone entering the building for any reason is required to wear a mask in common areas, regardless of their vaccination status. This includes the sanctuary, social hall, all vestibules and hallways and all bathrooms.

Thank you for your understanding and cooperation!

Board Reaffirms: Black Lives Matter

Leadership of the RAC and URJ have recently confirmed that it is still the official position of the Reform Movement that “Black Lives Matter” is a social movement, not a specific organization. Although there is a wide swath of individuals and organizations taking up that mantle, some of whom take problematic stances with which we do not agree, we cannot afford to jeopardize the important work of promoting racial justice by stepping away from presenting a united front. As such:

We are in agreement that Black lives matter.

We are in agreement that as members of the Reform Jewish movement, we are responsible for fulfilling the commandments to do all that we can to ensure racial justice and equality.

We are in agreement that we are not endorsing any one organization identifying itself as "Black Lives Matter" but rather we are engaging in the work that needs to be done to ensure that racial justice becomes a reality.

-- Approved by the Board of Trustees, Aug. 3, 2021

It's Easy...Help Save the Planet

Each of us can do our part to address Climate Change personally. Here are some ideas that are easy to incorporate into your personal routines:

- Walk or bike to nearby destinations. Reducing car trips of less than one mile by half could save 2 million metric tons of CO₂ per year in the United States.
- Unplug electronics that draw power when not in use. Use a power strip to turn off these devices. This can save 23% of average home power usage!
- Eat less meat, as livestock is responsible for nearly 4% of all methane emissions. By the way, did you know that feeding seaweed to cows may help cut methane by 82%?

(Some content borrowed from the June 2021 AARP Bulletin)

Urgent Need For Housing

The withdrawal of US troops in Afghanistan has led to what many of us consider a moral imperative to welcome vulnerable Afghan refugees, particularly those who supported the United States in tangible ways over the last 20 years. As you've likely seen in the news, many are in extreme danger and are desperately trying to flee.

USCRI-Albany is expecting to receive hundreds of these immigrants and other refugees in the coming months. Right now, the most overwhelming and urgent need is housing. Families have already started arriving, and the lack of affordable housing exacerbated by COVID constraints has become a crisis.

USCRI-Albany is looking for apartments, in-law units, and other creative solutions. Housing in Albany and near a bus line is ideal, unless the housing comes with a volunteer driver willing to undergo a USCRI background check. Available funding for the housing is about \$20-30 per day. If you are aware of available apartment-type spaces to offer and are willing to explore the specifics, please contact USCRI-Albany Director Jill Peckenpaugh at 518-459-1790 or JPeckenpaugh@uscri-albany.org.

Booking It!

Batman (a.k.a. Paul Collins-Hackett) and his trusty assistant Hamlin zoomed (as in SUV) into the B'nai Sholom parking lot on July 29 to collect the many boxes of books that were so generously donated by B'nai Sholom and Delmar Presbyterian congregants. The RED (Read Each Day) Bookshelf, located at 200 Green Street in Albany, was the destination for these many volumes. Loaded into the vehicle by Batman, Hamlin, Gail Volk, Anita Stein, Lois Gordon, Valerie Tabak, Jesse Dinkin and Dinkin Autumn, the books will be cleaned, sorted and eventually delivered to residents of Albany.

To find out more about this amazing organization, check out:

www.theredbookshelf.org

Calling For Voting Rights

B'nai Sholom members and Rabbi Weisbrot participated in the Religious Action Center (RAC-NY) Zoom meeting with Senator Chuck Schumer on August 1, 2021, to advocate for two voting rights bills. Statewide, 678 people participated in the Zoom meeting – a new record for RAC-NY by a long shot. Senator Schumer fielded the call for 40 minutes, even though he was in the midst of a special session on the infrastructure bills. RAC-NY leaders presented our views and questioned Senator Schumer. Since the Senator agrees with us on the importance of passing the voting rights bills, our goal was to pressure him to do even more, to make sure “failure is not an option” (to quote the Senator) and urge that he do everything possible to pass the bills, including changing the Senate rules. His closing words to us suggested that we accomplished our goal: “The fact that you were here, the fact that you have my back, the fact that you are pushing so hard on something I so devoutly believe in, gives me strength.”

Our presence made a difference, and we will let you know if further action is needed to continue the pressure on Senator Schumer to modify the filibuster and pass freedom to vote bills. Meanwhile, be on the lookout for a Reform Movement *Freedom to Vote* meeting in early October to plan the next steps in the RAC *Freedom to Vote* campaign. You can find more information about the campaign and the two bills our Movement is supporting here:

<https://rac.org/issues/racial-justice/racial-justice-campaign/freedom-vote>

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 the rabbi – 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.

News from the Fundraising Committee

Be a Kibbutznik

In lieu of the cost of preparing food for an oneg, make a contribution to commemorate an event or honor or to remember someone special. Contact Lois Gordon at rgordon1@nycap.rr.com by Tuesday of the week you want to make the contribution and you will be recognized in the weekly announcements. Make your check payable to B'nai Sholom and send it to the office with "Kibbutznik" written in the memo line.

September Kibbutzniks

Amy Sternstein – With much gratitude, appreciation and love to Maxine, Eric and Ethan Goldberg, Ellie and Randy Davis, Christine Blackman and Lois Gordon for going above and beyond to make my birthday extra special

Melissa Putterman Hoffmann and Gary Hoffmann – In memory of Gary's mother, Frieda Hoffmann

Lois Gordon – In memory of my mother-in-law, Eva Gordon

Mazal Tov!

... to Becky and Ben Marvin on the birth of their grandson, Noah Joseph, to Johanna and Joe Kitchell of Indianapolis on July 30.

... to Amy and Yossi Koren-Roth on the engagement of their daughter, Hadar, to Raphael Bendriem.

... to Stacey Wager-Pacuk on her engagement to Jeff Greenberg.

... to Candy Raderman on 1) the birth of her grandson, Carver Cole Hatch, to Adam and Rachel Hatch of Buffalo on October 15, 2020; and 2) the engagement of her son, Kyle Hatch, to Abby Belasen.

... to Roy Fruiterman and Ben Marvin on earning award ribbons for their Crafts and Fine Arts entries at the 2021 Altamont Fair.

Thank You!

The Office Manager is extremely grateful:

. . .to the dedicated Bulletin Brigade – Jim Savitt, Joan Savitt, Rema Goldstein, Anita Stein, Amy Sternstein, Barbara Devore, Joe DeFronzo, Mark and Cheryl Reeder and Anne Hausgaard – who help fold and stuff the monthly bulletins.

. . .to Lois Gordon, Margie Pass, Ellie Davis, Amy Sternstein, Marcia Tress, Bettina Stoller, Cheryl Reeder, Mark Reeder, Steve Ableman, Deb Adler, Dayle Zatlin, Nancy Rudinger, Linda Strohl, Katelyn Ouellette DiPaola, Barbara Devore, Maxine Goldberg, Ethan Goldberg, Eric Goldberg, Ann Lowenfels, Valerie Tabak, Ben Marvin, Becky Marvin, Anne Hausgaard, Gail Volk, Carol Smith, Roy Fruiterman and Lori Stuart – all of whom have volunteered their time to help with countless office projects.

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS!

The congregation extends a warm welcome to our newest members:

- Amelia Addor
- Jaimie Miller
- Teresa and Jeffrey Weisbrot



UPDATE

In Fall 2019, the B'nai Sholom Fundraising Committee in association with Ethan Goldberg (as his B'nai Mitzvah project) signed up to participate in the CLYNK To Give program.

We have done outreach at events, via the Bulletin and through announcements to solicit participation.

To date we have redeemed more than 10,404 containers and raised more than \$450 thanks to all of you who bag, tag & drop!

Every container you recycle helps the planet.

Here are some of the good things B'nai Sholom has done as a result of using CLYNK.

We have saved enough energy to light 13.4 lightbulbs -- 24 hours a day -- for a year.

We have saved the emissions equivalent of driving your car 2,537 miles.

We have diverted enough containers to fill 104.4 lobster traps.

* CLYNK's environmental impact calculations are based on the Environmental Protection Agency's Waste Reduction Model (WARM), more details can be found on the EPA website.

B'nai Sholom Legacy Society

Ensuring the Future
of B'nai Sholom ...



... Creating a Jewish Legacy Today!

It's a great time to join us!

As we begin a new chapter of B'nai Sholom's history
with Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot, help ensure B'nai Sholom
will continue to thrive in the future!

Contact a member of the Legacy Committee for more information:
Mimi Bruce, Chair; Libby Liebschutz, Barry Pendergrass, Dave Ray and
Stuart Schwartz

"As my ancestors planted for me, so do I plant for those who will come after me." -- Talmud Ta'anit 23

The following Yahrzeits will be observed in September

9/3 Minna Katzin*; Rae Goody; Harold Quell; Vivian Quell; Michael Goody; Marvin Morris; Leah Royne; Pauline Tauss; Edith Cabelly; Elsie Logwood; Edward Hoffman; Morris Parets*; Ethel Link; Pauline Stern

9/10 David Engler*; Lubi Radosh; Marylin Ruben; Joseph (Norm) Ouellette; Ari Propp; Rifka Propp; Charlotte Sacks; Shari Knieling; Alice Winston*; Betty Herbert

9/17 Rose Levine Goldstein*; Mollie Belkin Lazoroff*; Henry Nussbaum; Martin Kleinfeld*; Jakob Simon Krochmal; Arthur Nitka; Saul Toback; Irving Cherry; Yetta Berman; David Binewitch*; Samuel Pock*; Jeannie Bick; Rose Pass

9/24 Rose Dietchman; Donald Goldberg; Asher Kaplan; Joe Meer; Eva Teumim

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

The Congregation Notes with Thanks These Contributions:

General Fund

In honor of **our children and granddaughters** by Joel Blumenthal and Dayle Zatin

In memory of **Arthur Nitka** by Mark and Cheryl Reeder

In memory of **Paul Edward Krochmal** by Ruth and Herb Swift

In memory of **Gerda Frankel** by Ruth and Herb Swift

In memory of **Edith Cabelly** by Robin Seguine

In memory of **Dror Koren** by Amy and Yossi Koren-Roth

In memory of **Harold Roth** by Amy and Yossi Koren-Roth

In memory of **Ilene Goldman** by Lori Stuart

In memory of **Nathan Green** by Ellie and Randy Davis

Vera Propp – Books for Babies Fund

In honor of **the birth of Noah Kitchell, grandson of Becky and Ben Marvin** by Jesse Dinkin and Valerie Tabak.

What is CDAUH?

The Capital District Alliance for Universal Healthcare (CDAUH) was spearheaded by Dr. Richard Propp in 2005 after a B'nai Sholom Shabbaton addressing the need for better and more affordable health care. Based on his experience as a practicing physician in Albany from 1968 to 1994, Richard was keenly aware of the social cost of inequity in health care. CDAUH has continued to promote improved Medicare For All as the basis for health care reform, adhering to the core principles of its founding: promotion of social justice, educating the medical community and the public, and bringing together people of diverse backgrounds to work toward a common goal.

Currently, we are working with partner groups in the Capital District including the Campaign for New York Health, the Saratoga Health Committee and the North Country Caucus. CDAUH's activities include invited speaker events (in the past, we have sponsored Dr. David Himmelstein of Physicians for a National Health Program), annual Medicare birthday celebrations, educational forums held at libraries, churches and synagogues throughout the Capital District as well as distribution of educational literature at local farmers' markets and festivals (such as the Albany Tulip Festival). Additionally, the independently produced movie *Fix It*, about the health care system, is used as a tool to initiate discussion at our forums.

CDAUH meets monthly at 7 p.m. on a Thursday evening by Zoom or, when possible, at B'nai Sholom. All are welcome, and you are encouraged to send a contact email to the current chairperson, Dr. David Ray, at doctorklez@gmail.com to be added to our listserve. The Facebook page for CDAUH is found at <https://www.facebook.com/groups/CDAUHC> and members are welcome to post links to articles and events related to health care justice and equity.

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

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 2 nd 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>
October.....	September 8
November.....	October 13