

# *B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation*

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MARCH 2023

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Visit us at <https://www.bnaisholomalbany.org>  
ADAR/NISAN 5783

***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, March 3	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, March 4	EXTENDED STUDY	10:00 AM
Monday, March 6	<b>PURIM CELEBRATION</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Friday, March 10	<b>TOT SHABBAT SERVICE</b>	<b>5:30 PM</b>
	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE – ZOOM ONLY</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, March 11	TORAH STUDY	9:30 AM
	<b>TORAH SERVICE &amp; NAMING CEREMONY</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>
Friday, March 17	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, March 18	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, March 24	<b>FOUNDERS' DAY SERVICE AT BETH EMETH</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>
	<u>NO SHABBAT SERVICE AT B'NAI SHOLOM</u>	
Saturday, March 25	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, March 31	<b>COMMUNITY SHABBAT SERVICE &amp; DINNER</b>	<b>TIME TBA</b>
	AT THE JEWISH COMMUNITY CENTER	
	<u>NO SHABBAT SERVICE AT B'NAI SHOLOM</u>	
Saturday, April 1	EXTENDED STUDY	10:00 AM
Thursday, April 6	<b>B'NAI SHOLOM'S TOT PASSOVER SEDER</b>	<b>5:30 PM</b>
Friday, April 7	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, April 8	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM

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

***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.***



**When someone mentions the name “Esther”**

do you feel the earth move under your feet...  
or get an urge to do the locomotion...  
or wish you could send Haman so far away???

B'nai Sholom  
and the  
Shushan National Touring Company and  
Gluttons for Punishment

Present

## **“JEW-TIFUL: A CAROLE KING MEGILLAH”**

Featuring our favorite Bible love story set to tunes written by Carole King or  
used in *Beautiful: The Carole King Musical*

A totally un-Orthodox (really!) musical revue written by B'nai Sholom's own Brill  
Building brood of award-whining songwriters

**MONDAY, MARCH 6, 7 P.M.**

Giggle as a gaggle of crazy congregants deftly delivers  
delightfully deranged ditties

Continuous revelry

Multi-access – Live in the Sanctuary and at home via Zoom

**DON'T LOSE THAT LOVING FEELING!!**

**CELEBRATE PURIM WITH B'NAI SHOLOM AND  
YOU'LL STILL LOVE US TOMORROW – GUARANTEED!!**

## **FOUNDERS' DAY SHABBAT SERVICE: FRIDAY, MARCH 24, AT BETH EMETH**

On Friday, March 24, at 7:30 PM, the Reform congregations of the Capital District will join together to celebrate Founders' Day, when we acknowledge the contributions of both Isaac Mayer Wise and Stephen S. Wise, who founded the primary institutions of the Reform Movement in America.

This year, our Founders' Day Shabbat service will be hosted by Congregation Beth Emeth at 100 Academy Road in Albany. We are welcome to join in person or virtually (link coming soon). B'nai Sholom will NOT be holding separate services on March 24 so that all may join this communal service. All participating congregations will be sharing their individual list of names for Kaddish. Contact Rabbi Weisbrot if you are interested in singing with the joint choir that evening!

The guest speaker this year will be Cantor Howard Stahl, a former long-time cantor of Congregation Beth Emeth.

## **Inclusivity Collaborative: Working Toward a More Welcoming Temple Environment**

The Inclusivity Collaborative (formerly known as Audacious Hospitality) has officially begun at B'nai Sholom. Guided by the URJ but with ideas and recommendations geared specifically to our temple, our group will be working toward the goal of making B'nai Sholom a more accepting and comfortable temple for all. Why the choice of name? "Inclusivity" emphasizes that B'nai Sholom welcomes all people, regardless of race, gender orientation, disability, etc. "Collaborative" indicates that all congregants are encouraged to work toward this goal. Also, our group will be collaborating with various temple committees to implement changes that will help make B'nai Sholom feel like a place where everyone can belong, without judgment or difficulty. If you have any questions or would like to make suggestions, please contact either Carol Smith ([csmith1161@gmail.com](mailto:csmith1161@gmail.com)) or Maxine Goldberg ([maxm0304@yahoo.com](mailto:maxm0304@yahoo.com)). We are excited to be bringing this initiative to our temple. Stay tuned for further updates!

## **BE ON GUARD AGAINST EMAIL SPOOFING SCAM**

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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.

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## **Social Action/Social Justice**

Kick Off Shabbat with a Mitzvah: B'nai Sholom is Holding a Red Cross Blood Drive on Friday, March 10  
9 AM to 1 PM

*We need donors and non-donors to make our drive a success!!!*



The Blood Drive will be held in the Social Hall. If you are a regular donor, please note that January 13 was the last day you could donate prior to our drive. If you can't donate blood, there are many ways you can help, either before or during the drive.

While walk-in appointments are welcomed, you can schedule your appointment by calling  
1-800-RED CROSS  
or by using online scheduling at [www.redcross.org](http://www.redcross.org) keyword: Bnai Sholom

\*\*\* REMEMBER!!! 16 YEAR-OLDS ARE ELIGIBLE TO DONATE!!! \*\*\*  
(with signed parental permission)

### **DO YOU HAVE ART SUPPLIES STASHED IN A CLOSET OR DRAWER?**

While cleaning up at the synagogue, new and unused art supplies were discovered and will be donated for a fabulous Arts and Crafts basket for the Family Promise Auction in May. But despite the wonderful finds at B'nai Sholom, there are still some things we need:

***We found new watercolor brushes but...***

NEED WATERCOLOR PAINTS AND WATERCOLOR PAPER/PAD

***We found fluffy white feathers and colorful sequins but...***

NEED FELT OR FOAM SQUARES/SHAPES, CONSTRUCTION OR FANCY PAPERS and GLUE

***We found crayons and pastels but...***

NEED A DRAWING PAD (COULD USE A COLOR MARKER SET, TOO)

***We found two craft kits: a hand puppet and a decorative frame, but...***

OTHER KITS (BEADED JEWELRY/KEY CHAINS? ORIGAMI? PAPER AIRPLANES?) WOULD BE GREAT

**All items must be new and unopened. Use your imagination! A kids' craft ideas book might be a great addition.**

If you have any items or wish to purchase some items, please contact Becky Marvin [beckymarvin4574@gmail.com](mailto:beckymarvin4574@gmail.com) by mid-March.

## **Social Action/Social Justice** (Continued)

### **IT'S IN THE BAG FOR FAMILY PROMISE!**



During the month of March, for every reusable COMMUNITY BAG purchased from the Hannaford Store at 900 Central Ave. in Albany (Century II Mall), \$1.00 will be donated to Family Promise of the Capital Region.

### **SAVE THE DATE**

Social Action/Social Justice Shabbat will be held on Friday, April 28. While we are waiting for detailed confirmation of the topic, this Shabbat service is always timely and always meaningful, SO MARK YOUR CALENDAR NOW!

## **\$225**

That's how much the Social Action/Social Justice Committee allocates for each time we shop, every other month, to fill three Free Food Fridges in Albany. Thanks to the generosity of members of our congregation, Anita Stein and Monica Vail performed this *mitzvah* on Sunday, February 5.

Using the gift cards that are purchased through our Fundraising Committee (shoutout to Ellie Davis), shopping at Hannaford and ShopRite, sorting the fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy items and other nutritional foods and beverages into three equal groups, the food is then loaded into three pre-designated locations that Jamella Anderson, leader of Free Food Fridges Albany, determines need our attention for a specific date.

Our next "shop and restock refrigerators" date will be in early April. Please consider being part of this worthwhile effort by donating a Hannaford or ShopRite card when you refill your own or by making a donation to our Free Food Fridges fund. Every dollar you donate helps to feed one of our neighbors in Albany.

Don't forget to send in the form for your donation for Mishloach Manot!  
We will deliver the bags to your homes on March 5. If you do not wish to have home delivery, please let us know by contacting Ellie Davis at [davisj0726@gmail.com](mailto:davisj0726@gmail.com)

## Save the date for a **COMMUNITY SHABBAT** on **Friday, March 31, 2023!**

Friday-night services & dinner hosted by Jewish Federation of NENY at the Albany JCC

Supervised by Vaad Hakashruth of the Capital District

All are welcome! Learn more and register at [jewishfedny.org/community-shabbat](http://jewishfedny.org/community-shabbat)



### **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*

## ADULT ED NEWS

### Upcoming courses – look for registration form in the April Bulletin

- “Siblings, Second Temple Judaism and the Development of Early Christianity and Rabbinic Judaism” taught by Steve Stark-Riemer. Tuesdays, May 9-June 13, 10-11:45 AM.

*This is the first six weeks of a two-part course focusing on the archaeology, history and religion of Ancient Israel during the Second Temple Period.*

- “Three Views of Jewish History” taught by Professor Paul Finkelman. Mondays, May 1 - 15, 7:30-8:45 PM

Dr. Finkelman is a noted legal scholar and a specialist in American Jewish history. The topics for this course are:

May 1 – **Jews and the Black Death**, where we will discuss the horrific bubonic plague of the mid-14<sup>th</sup> century and explanations for the Jews’ relative immunity based on genetics and not the cultural myths attributing this to cleanliness and kashrut.

May 8 – **Jews and Slavery**, which will start with the biblical context and update the story to America through the 19<sup>th</sup> century as we learn about Jews as both slave owners and abolitionists.

May 15 – **Jews and the American Revolution** will examine how the presence of Jews and their active participation in the Revolution changed the United States.

As we go forward exploring Judaism from a variety of perspectives and platforms, the Adult Ed Committee is always looking for new committee members as well suggestions for future programs. Contact Barney Horowitz for more information.

## A FEW MINUTES WITH THE TORAH

Spotlighting the outstanding d’vei Torah written by congregants. This month, we present Vayechi, written by Howard Domfort and delivered by Howard at the January 2023 Board of Trustees meeting.

D’var Torah for January 2023 Board of Trustees Meeting: Vayechi

By  
Howard Domfort

My parsha is Vayechi - translated to “And he lived.” Who is “he”? He is Jacob.

How did I come to choose Vayechi? I checked online and this was my bar mitzvah portion 55 years ago. I did not remember that. And at 13 I just wanted to get through the ceremony. I was not a good Hebrew language student, but I did prevail. My family and friends said I did a nice job chanting my part.

An aside: At our wedding on Sept. 9, 1990, my uncle said to me “You did it again to me.” I asked him what did I do? He said today is the US Tennis Open men’s finals. And my bar mitzvah reception was the afternoon of Super Bowl 2. I replied, “Oh well, c’est la vie.”

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*(Continued from page 7.)*

Vayechi. It is the last reading in the Book of Genesis. It is also the shortest portion. Jacob lived 17 years of his 147 in Egypt. He asked his son Joseph to swear to bury him with Abraham and Isaac in Canaan. Joseph agreed. Jacob blessed his sons. He also blessed Joseph's sons Ephraim and Menassah. And in a way adopted them as his own.

Jacob had poor eyesight due to his age. Joseph had his 2 sons kneel before Jacob, Ephraim the younger brother on Jacob's left and Menassah on his right. Jacob crossed his arms and put his right hand on Ephraim's head and left hand on Menassah's head. Jacob prayed that God would bless these boys and have many children. Joseph was upset as the older son should have gotten the right-hand honor. Jacob said "No! They will both become great men, but the younger will be even greater."

Like written "wills" of today. Jacob told his sons his "will" and some of what he saw as the future for them. Some of his sons were good people and others bad people. In birth order:

- Reuben: bad. He had sex in Jacob's home. He did not get the traditional first-born son inheritance.
- Simon and Levi: very bad. They were extremely violent. Their anger was cursed, and descendants would be scattered all over Israel.
- Judah: good. He would be honored by his brothers, and his family would rule for many years.
- Zebulun: good. He would live and work by the sea.
- Issachar: good. He was big and strong, but not smart. He would farm for others.
- Dan: bad. He was evil and needed to pray to God for salvation.
- Gad: good. He would defend Israel from invaders.
- Asher: good. He would farm and have fine crops.
- Naphtali: fair. He talked a lot.
- Joseph: good. He was a wonderful son. Even as his brothers tried to hurt him, he remained calm. Jacob and God blessed him.
- Benjamin: bad. He was a greedy person.

Jacob's sons became the 12 tribes of Israel. After he blessed them, Jacob commanded his sons to bury him in the Cave of Machpelah in Canaan where Abraham, Sarah, Isaac, Rebecca and Leah were buried. Then he died. After Jacob died, Joseph ordered his physicians to embalm Jacob.

This took 40 days.

Joseph asked and received permission from Pharaoh to bury Jacob in Canaan. Joseph went with his entire family, Pharaoh's court, Egypt's elders, some chariots and horsemen. After passing the Jordan River, they mourned Jacob for seven days. The sons buried Jacob as he had asked, then all returned to Egypt.

Joseph's brothers were worried that Joseph would be angry with them and do them harm. Jacob had ordered Joseph to forgive his brothers, which he did. Joseph said even if you meant me harm, God had a reason for it: To preserve the nation. Joseph told his brothers not to be afraid and that he would provide for them and their families.

Joseph lived to 110 years old. He even saw his great grandchildren. He told his brothers that God would one day take them from Egypt to the land of Israel. Joseph had his brothers swear to bury him in Israel someday. He was embalmed and put in a coffin. (Many years later, when Moses led the Exodus from Egypt, they took Joseph's remains.)

*(Continued on page 9.)*



*(Continued from page 8.)*

To me this section is less about God and more about family, life and death: even 3,500 years ago some people made pre-arrangements for their funeral and burial. This concept or tradition goes on today. It is a good idea to make some arrangements or at least talk about it. I know it is not something you really want to talk about, but it will happen to all of us.

I know first-hand of not having anything in place when my wife suddenly died. I was in a panic. Thankfully my brother-in-law and sister-in-law were there to help Marcus and me.

Another concept that touched me was Jacob's "will" when he was talking to his sons, telling them basically what they will inherit and become in life. Like wills of today should be in writing to let people know what they will inherit. It is a good idea to have one as it may stop some family infighting. But then again it may not.

Also, try not to hold grudges against people. Like Joseph, who forgave his brothers, we should do the same. I know it's hard as we are only human, but it seems to be the right thing to do.

## **Spotlight on New Members: Gabe and Hailey Hanoufa**

**One of a series of articles from the Membership Committee to introduce those who have recently joined B'nai Sholom. This month we welcome Gabe and Hailey Hanoufa.**

Gabe grew up in Northwest Philly before moving to Cheltenham, PA, when he was a teenager. After high school he attended Temple University, studying construction engineering, which is engineering with a focus on the application of engineering theories.

After college, Gabe moved to Baltimore, where he met Hailey. They relocated to Albany in the Fall of 2020, due to a new opportunity Hailey was offered. Gabe currently works as a construction project manager/estimator for a civil construction company. The company focuses on site work, underground utility work and general infrastructure construction.



Hailey grew up in the Baltimore area. She attended Berklee College of Music and received a degree in music therapy. After college, she moved back to Baltimore, where she met Gabe. As Gabe mentioned, they moved to Albany in 2020 for a job opportunity that Hailey received. They now live in the Melrose neighborhood of Albany and absolutely love it!

Hailey currently works as a music therapist for a private practice, working with individuals with developmental disabilities from pre-K through end-of-life care. She noted she is currently working toward making a career shift and pursuing a degree in speech-language pathology.

*(Continued on page 10.)*

*(Continued from page 9.)*

When asked about hobbies and interests, Gabe described his enjoyment of being outdoors whenever possible, whether it be hiking, paddling or biking. His main hobby is hiking; he is an aspiring 46er, along with many other challenges. Besides the outdoors, he is also interested in building. Gabe commented he can usually be found tinkering or working on something around the house.

Hailey also has many hobbies and interests. She said, first and foremost, she is a musician. Hailey plays clarinet, saxophone, guitar, voice and piano. She mentioned she would love to make music with other members of the congregation. In her free time, she enjoys reading all kinds of fiction books. Hailey commented she can often be found browsing the shelves at the Pine Hills library. She also enjoys cooking and baking. Hailey said, "I have been eating a vegan diet for many years and love to try to impress even the most skeptical audiences with my recipes!" Hailey is a proud plant parent and enjoys caring for many house plants, particularly orchids! Finally, when not cozied up inside, Hailey loves hiking and exploring the mountains.

When asked what attracted Gabe and Hailey to B'nai Sholom, they both agreed that B'nai Sholom has a sense of community. Gabe mentioned that "everybody puts in the work for the congregation as a whole to succeed." Hailey added that she has seen how everyone pitches in and lends a helping hand to support the congregation and the community. Hailey hopes to reconnect with the Jewish community. She noted that, "Since I left school I have not reconnected with the community as a whole. I would like to meet new people and contribute as best I can toward the goal of tikkun olam, while also learning new skills and hearing about the experiences of others." Hailey added, "I have enjoyed seeing how musical and creative everyone is as well." Neither Hailey nor Gabe had a small community synagogue experience growing up and hope B'nai Sholom will better meet their goal of being a part of the Jewish community.

### **The Congregation Notes with Thanks These Contributions:**

#### **General Fund**

In memory of **Sandra Samuels and Leonard Samuels** by Mark and Sharon Sklar

In gratitude for **the opportunity to stream The Ritchie Boys and participate in the discussion** by Ellen Browne

In memory of **Leo Cabelly** by Robin Seguire

In memory of **Avi Ezra** by Amy and Yossi Koren-Roth

In memory of **Jack Jarett** by Amy and Yossi Koren-Roth

In appreciation of **Rabbi Weisbrot** by Nancy and David Rudinger

In memory of **David Kessler** by Nancy and David Rudinger

In memory of **Morris Alowitz** by Arthur and Rita Alowitz

In memory of **Hilda Smith** by Arthur and Rita Alowitz

In memory of **Bernard Smith** by Arthur and Rita Alowitz

In memory of **Sylvia Alowitz Brownstein** by Arthur and Rita Alowitz

#### **Social Action Committee – Fresh Food Fund**

In honor of **Valerie Tabak's birthday** by Gail Volk

In support: Melissa Browne and Mary Warrener

#### **Social Action Committee – Vera Propp Literacy Fund – Books for Babies**

A donation from Lois Gordon

#### **Library Fund**

A donation from Lois Gordon

#### **Golden Anniversary Fundraising Appeal: Celebrating 50 Years and Beyond**

#### **Annual Maintenance and Operations**

Stuart Schwartz and Debbie Youngelman

#### **Circle of Life Capital Projects**

Lois Gordon

Amy and Yossi Koren-Roth

Jim and Joan Savitt

**The following Yahrzeits will be observed in March:**

3/3 Stanley Levy; Murray Maurer; Jerome Morse; Abe Rudman; Gertrude Fass; Harold Nozik; Mitchell Burkowsky; Donald A. Wexler\*; Edith Watnick; Elsie Meer

3/10 Barry Brody; Evelyn Rosen; Albert Blakeslee\*; Lazar Kleinfeld; Sylvia Lande; Izadore Pollack; Julie Lawrence\*; Carey B. Hatch, Jr.; Evelyn Turoff\*; Adele C. Blumenthal

3/17 Judith Bond Klein; Louis Schaffer; Benjamin Steinhart; George Kurak; Max Rosen; Doris Stephany

3/24 Dora Stein; Richard Rosenthal; Helga Bessac; Lillian Oblas\*; Leonarda Defronzo

3/31 Harold Lazoroff\*; Irma Schwartzman\*; Lillian Gaes Schwadron\*; Michael Defronzo; Caleb Reeder; Elizabeth Stedman Tuck

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

**RABBI:** Danielle Weisbrot can be reached at [rabiweisbrot@bnaisholom.albany.ny.us](mailto:rabiweisbrot@bnaisholom.albany.ny.us)

**RABBI EMERITUS:** Donald P. Cashman

**PRESIDENT:** Ann Lowenfels can be reached at [annlowenfels@gmail.com](mailto:annlowenfels@gmail.com)

**OFFICE MANAGER:** Christine Blackman can be reached at [christine@bnaisholom.albany.ny.us](mailto: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<sup>nd</sup> 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>
April.....	March 8
May.....	April 12