

# B'nai Shalom Reform Congregation

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APRIL 2023

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

NISAN/IYAR 5783

**B'nai Shalom 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 31	<b>COMMUNITY SHABBAT SERVICE &amp; DINNER AT JCC NO SHABBAT SERVICE AT B'NAI SHOLOM</b>	<b>6:00 PM</b>
Saturday, April 1	EXTENDED STUDY	10:00 AM
Thursday, April 6	<b>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
Wednesday, April 12	<b>LAST DAY OF PASSOVER – YIZKOR SERVICE</b>	<b>6:00 PM</b>
Thursday, April 13	YOM HASHOAH DISCUSSION W/ RABBI WEISBROT AT EAST GREENBUSH PUBLIC LIBRARY	6:30 PM
Friday, April 14	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, April 15	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Monday, April 17	<b>YOM HASHOAH SERVICE AT CONGREGATION GATES OF HEAVEN</b>	<b>7:30 PM</b>
Friday, April 21	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE [ZOOM ONLY]</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, April 22	TORAH STUDY	9:30 AM
	<b>TORAH SERVICE</b>	<b>10:30 AM</b>
Tuesday, April 25	<b>YOM HAZIKARON &amp; YOM HAATZMAUT CEREMONY</b> AT THE MASSRY CENTER FOR THE ARTS, COLLEGE OF ST ROSE	<b>6:30 PM</b>
Friday, April 28	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE SOCIAL ACTION SHABBAT</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, April 29	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, May 5	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, May 6	EXTENDED STUDY	10:00 AM

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

**B'nai Shalom 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!

In February, I spent over two weeks in Israel. My main reason for going was to attend the annual convention – held in Israel every seventh year – of the Central Conference of American Rabbis, the rabbinic association of the Reform Movement. The convention itself was a wonderful opportunity to learn on a number of levels, engage in challenging conversations, experience a taste of Reform Jewish life in Israel, and build new connections with some of the approximately 250 colleagues who participated – including a mini B'nai Sholom “reunion” at the Western Wall with Rabbi Cashman and Rabbi Katz!

I extended the beginning of my trip, though, to show my parents around the country. It was their first visit to Israel and, for most of the week, I was their unofficial tour guide. Some things were familiar to me, especially when we made our way to Jerusalem, where I had spent the vast majority of my first year of rabbinical school. Some changes were pleasant surprises, such as the reimagined ANU Museum – formerly the Diaspora Museum – which strives to represent the broad spectrum of Jewish communities and Jewish observance around the world. And some changes were more unsettling.

We had to be careful about our travel routes to work around the public protests scheduled throughout the week and which have continued since our departure. We watched the news about eruptions of violence. And I was surprised by the light traffic one day, which I learned was the result of a strike in response. The proposed “judicial reforms” that would gut the authority of the Israeli Supreme Court, as well as the egregious killings of both Israelis and Palestinians, especially in Huwara, were a dark backdrop to our visit.

But it wasn’t all darkness. In the words of Genesis 3:3, “there was light;” and it was good. The energy of the protestors in the streets, the passion of members of the Knesset who are committed to protecting democracy, such as Reform Rabbi Gilad Kariv, the spreading recognition of the urgency of the moment, the joint Israeli-Palestinian youth groups (choirs, ultimate Frisbee teams, etc.) that are promoting dialogue and other signs of progress were both inspiring and uplifting.

Israel continues to be a beautiful and complicated place, with much to celebrate and much to wish changed. What gives me the most hope for its future – and for the future of all who live there – is that important conversations are happening, the influence of Reform and progressive Jewish values is growing, and more and more people are stepping forward together in favor of democracy, equality, pluralism, freedom and peace.

***L’shalom,***

**Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot**

## New B'nai Sholom Website, New Online Experience

The next time you click on [www.bnaisholomalbany.org](http://www.bnaisholomalbany.org), the display might look a little different. That's because...

### \*B'nai Sholom has a brand new website!!\*

A Communications Committee task force has spent more than a year working with a developer, Addicott Web, to give our website a modern design that presents the congregation as engaging, as warm, as vibrant and as welcoming as we know it is. It's not an overhaul – **it's all new.**

And we couldn't be more pleased with the result!

Among the new website's features:

- Professional, bold and consistent design throughout (can you spot details from the Ark in the backdrop?);
- Fast loading and easy navigation;
- Welcoming homepage with lots of photos, info about services and Torah study, space for multiple flyers and much more;
- New, brighter logo;
- Easy-to-read pages with photos on most;
- Ability to accept donations and dues online;
- Responsive display that will look right on any device.

And coming soon (we're really excited about these!)...

- A password-protected Members Only portal where we can post items that are just for B'nai Sholom members and not the general public;
- The ability to sign up and pay for B'nai Sholom events, classes and programs online with your credit card.

Stay tuned for full information when we roll out these new features.

One thing hasn't changed: our web address (URL) is still [www.bnaisholomalbany.org](http://www.bnaisholomalbany.org). If this address still takes you to the homepage of our former site, try clearing the cache in your web browser, then re-enter [www.bnaisholomalbany.org](http://www.bnaisholomalbany.org) into the address bar.

Since the site is brand new, there could still be some bugs in it or you might spot a content issue that was missed. Please be patient, and let Bruce Goldstein [wa3afs@nycap.rr.com](mailto:wa3afs@nycap.rr.com) and Dayle Zatlin [daylezatlin@gmail.com](mailto:daylezatlin@gmail.com) know what you've found.

Please check out and enjoy our new website – and then help spread the word on how to find us.

## **Take a “Sideways Dive” into Torah Study with Rabbi Weisbrot**

On **Thursday, April 20, at 7:30 PM**, join Rabbi Weisbrot on Zoom for a monthly “sideways dive” into other facets of Torah study – midrashic interpretations, Talmudic commentary and whatever other thoughts and insights come up in the group. No prior registration or experience necessary; just look for the Zoom link in the weekly e-blast!

## **Save the Date!!**

B'nai Sholom's Annual Meeting

Thursday, June 15, 7:00 PM

Multi-access – Live in the Sanctuary and via Zoom

Watch for more information in the coming weeks

## **Nominating Committee Formed for 2023-24**

In accordance with B'nai Sholom's by-laws, a Nominating Committee has been established for the purpose of nominating officers and board members for 2023-2024. The names of the members of the committee shall be reported in the congregational publication and announced from the pulpit at the following Friday evening worship service.

Members of the Nominating Committee are:

From the board: Julie Novkov, Gail Golderman and Linda Strohl

From the congregation: Carol Smith, Libby Liebschutz, Ben Marvin and Barbara Devore

## **Social Action/Social Justice**

### **GET READY FOR SPRING... IT'S TIME TO CLEAN OUT YOUR CLOSETS!**

Once again we are collecting clothing for donation to those in need in our region. We will collect CLEAN, GENTLY USED clothes and shoes—all seasons accepted. Please 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:

**TUESDAY, APRIL 18 through FRIDAY, APRIL 21  
WHEN THE BUILDING IS OPEN\*\***

or on

**SUNDAY, APRIL 23, 11 AM to 1 PM.**

***\*\*Please place them neatly in the marked classroom. Do not leave bags outside of building. Thank you!***

### **SOCIAL ACTION SHABBAT – FRIDAY, APRIL 28, 7:00 PM**

***There's more to combatting climate change than returning your empty bottles.***

Whether you celebrated our mild winter or mourned the lack of snow, we are all aware of how abnormal this winter was. But mild winters and hot/dry summers are signals of major changes that will affect us down the road. We're all probably pretty good with separating our recycling from our household trash, BUT there is so much more we can do at home, at work and at B'nai Sholom to help combat climate change. There has been a lot of controversy, hype and misinformation recently about efforts to end the use of gas in our homes and offices. You may be wondering what that means and asking, "Just how much money is this going to cost me?"

At our Social Action/Social Justice Shabbat, we'll share valuable information about how you can decrease your carbon footprint and help make a difference. We'll point you to resources and tell you about the RAC-NY Climate Covenant. RAC-NY is part of the Religious Action Center of Reform Judaism, the Movement's advocacy and legislative initiative. You can decarbonize, save on energy costs and boost RAC-NY's strength to help reduce future climate change impacts.

### **MITZVAH OPPORTUNITY**

Temple Israel is holding a Mitzvah Day on Sunday, April 30, 2-4 PM. Members of the larger Jewish community are welcome to join in on one of many mitzvah projects. All ages welcome! To register, contact Deborah Stayman by email [dstayman@nycap.rr.com](mailto:dstayman@nycap.rr.com) or by text 518-366-4537.

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

### **SAVE THESE DATES!**

**RIVERSWEEP on May 6:** Join the crew as we clean up at the Corning Preserve. If you plan on joining in, be sure to let Barry Pendergrass know so he can send you details about place and time. Contact Barry at [bpenderg37@gmail.com](mailto:bpenderg37@gmail.com).

**CAPITAL REGION PRIDE PARADE on June 11:** We'll be marching again and Candy Raderman will be our point person on the ground. Please let Becky Marvin know if you plan to attend so we can coordinate carpools: [beckymarvin4574@gmail.com](mailto:beckymarvin4574@gmail.com).

## **SNAP**

Definitions:

1. break or cause to break suddenly and completely, usually with a crackling sound.
2. (of an animal) make a sudden audible bite.
3. a sudden, sharp crackling sound or movement.
4. a hurried, irritable tone or manner.
5. done or taken on the spur of the moment, unexpectedly or without notice.
6. in football, the start of an offensive play. The *snap* involves two players, the quarterback and the center.
7. **Supplemental Nutritional Assistance Program** – In the United States, the program formerly known as the ***Food Stamp Program*** is a federal program that provides food-purchasing assistance to low- and no-income people.

At the end of February, the federal government ended the boost to the **SNAP** benefits put in place during the height of the COVID-19 pandemic. Almost 3 million New Yorkers have lost an average of \$150 per month, with a family of four losing \$289 in monthly benefits. Rising food prices, transportation to grocery stores and the rate of inflation are further obstacles put into the path of those who face rising food insecurity.

**Our neighbors continue to need our help.  
Please continue to support the**

### **FREE FOOD FRIDGE ALBANY FUND**

By purchasing Hannaford or ShopRite cards from our Fundraising Committee or adding spare change (or even dollars) to the newly placed jar in the synagogue office, you too can help to feed our neighbors in need.

## Purim Shpiel Beyond Beautiful

They made us laugh; they brought tears to our eyes. This year's shpiel by the Shushan National Touring Company at B'nai Sholom's Purim celebration was awe-inspiring. And the accolades are still coming in.

The Academy of Humor and Good Taste in Performing Arts, otherwise known as the Hamantaschen, has announced this year's winners. Directed by Ben Marvin, chosen as the Best Director of a Moving Non-Movie, the cast moved swiftly and musically through an evening that featured soaring voices, brilliant songs and some epically serious silly. The award for "Best Songwriting Offscreen" went to Phil Teumim, Liz, Sarah and Aaron Davis, Rabbi Weisbrot, Becky Marvin, Julie Novkov, Cheryl Reeder and Amy Sternstein for lyrics that riveted and rocked.

Phil Teumim and Jeff Klamka as The Gluttons for Punishment garnered the "Carole King" award for beauty and spunk in musical accompaniment. For their portrayals of Haman and Esther, Liz and Sarah Davis – a mother/daughter combo known to B'nai Sholom audiences for their vibrant vocals – received the "Child of Mine" award for playing characters in conflict without coming to blows. Veteran Purim performers Mari Vosburgh, Cheryl Reeder, Carol Smith, Deb Adler and Will Vail received the "Natural Woman/Jazzman" award for moving us to tears as courtiers, eunuchs and villagers, while Amy Sternstein was a shoo-in for the "Take a Giant Step!" award. The "Smackwater Jack" award for performing with moxie went to David Liebschutz as Ahasuerus. Seasoned performer Doug Smith won the "You've Got a Friend" award for giving us a Mordecai to remember. The "Nightingale" award for living, eating and breathing with a musician and still managing to enjoy singing herself went to Martie Teumim for her performance as Memucan. As Vashti, Ann Shapiro snagged the "Alligators All Around" prize for humor and dedication and general sass. And our very own rabbi, Rabbi Weisbrot, was awarded the "Sweet Seasons" prize for musicality and occasional puns in her performance of the role of Hegai.

The entire cast and production staff are taking a well-deserved break from Purim till the next time the touring company comes to town.

## Our Recent Kibbutzniks

Judy and Roy Fruiterman

In honor of our mother who is turning 100 on January 18.

Valerie Tabak and Jesse Dinkin

In memory of Lillian Dinkin, a truly unforgettable mother, mother-in-law and grandmother.

Lois Gordon

In memory of my father, Arthur Katz.

Amy Sternstein

In loving memory of my mom, Barbara Sternstein, who I lost 6 years ago and miss every day.

Joe and Susan DeFronzo

Honoring Ben Marvin and his multi-talented team of singers, actors and musicians at the Purim Shpiel. Excellent job!

## **Spotlight on New Members: Monica and Will Vail**

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

Will grew up in Rochester, NY; Monica grew up in Stillwater, MN. They met after college, working together as teachers for Nature's Classroom in Massachusetts. The couple lived in various places in the East until settling in Delmar with their family in 2000.

Monica and Will have two children, James and Samuel Vail. Will has been a social worker since 1996 and is now the director of Bethlehem Senior Services. Monica has been a registered nurse since 1997 and the school nurse for Hamagrael Elementary School in Bethlehem since 2005.

Their love of wilderness trips, canoeing, hiking and cross country skiing brought them together. Music and backgammon are also passions. Will plays the guitar and sings, and Monica plays the violin. They were attracted to B'nai Sholom when Will attended graduate school in 1994, always feeling welcome. Monica and Will hope to volunteer to help people and become part of a caring community.

## **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*

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

### **General Fund**

In memory of **Judith Klein** by Steve Klein and Susan Radosh

In memory of **Caleb Reeder, Sr.** by Mark and Cheryl Reeder

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

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

### **Social Action Fund**

In gratitude for **your welcome, tolerance, Torah study, monthly bulletins, emails, Purim gift bags and for intellectual stimulus and challenges** by Irene Harbison

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

In support: Valerie Tabak and Jesse Dinkin, Maxine, Eric and Ethan Goldberg, Gail and Larry Volk

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

In honor of **Gail Volk** by Valerie Tabak and Jesse Dinkin

### **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**

In honor of **Rabbi Weisbrot's Installation** by Mari Vosburgh

In memory of **Hortense Youngelman** by Amy and Yossi Koren-Roth

## **The following Yahrtzeits will be observed in April:**

4/7 Sara Steinhart; Milton Farkas; Elizabeth Stedman Tuck; Christa Polednik; Rebecca Miller Shultz; Gerald Minzer; Hazel Propp Sohmer; Richard Rosenthal

4/14 Jacob Hammer\*; Sheldon Bosin; Mota Teummim; Goldie Goldstein; David Fiks; Larry Propp; Richard Propp\*; Judy Reeder

4/21 Herbert Malsky; Rhoda Green; Sara Rockovitz Propp\*; Manuel Aronson\*; Anne Smuckler Paktor; Betty Altschuler Gottlieb; Eleanor Zaremsky; Sidney Devore; William Lacov; Edward Blumenthal; Anna Raderman; Aaron Harold Rosner

4/28 Lieselotte Weiner; Ron Royne; Fay Levinn; George Rudinger; Bernard Earl Shanks; Moses Khazam; Sophie Goldstein\*; Gertrude Sperber\*

\*Denotes that a Perpetual Memorial has been established.

## **Love to Sing? Ne'imah Wants You!**

**Calling All Singers: Ne'imah, the Jewish Community Chorus**, needs singers of all voice types. You do not need to read Hebrew or have a beautiful voice to join - just a love of music and the ability to carry a tune. Rehearsals are Sunday evenings in the B'hai Sholom Sanctuary. If you are interested in joining or learning more, please contact Mari Vosburgh [marivosburgh@gmail.com](mailto:marivosburgh@gmail.com).

## **Yom HaShoah Discussion**

### **Holocaust Remembrance Day: What, Why, How? Discussion with Rabbi Weisbrot at the East Greenbush Community Library**

This year, International Holocaust Remembrance Day fell on January 27; Yom HaShoah starts on April 17. What does a day of remembrance mean? How can we make it meaningful? Join us for an evening of learning and remembrance **Thursday, April 13, at 6:30 PM at the East Greenbush Community Library, 10 Community Way, East Greenbush**. Rabbi Weisbrot will lead a discussion of these two days of remembrance and their unique roles in navigating the loss and the legacy of the Holocaust. For information and to register, visit <https://eastgreenbushlibrary.librarymarket.com/holocaust-remembrance-day-what-why-how>

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

Period Covered

Deadline

May.....April 12

June.....May 10