

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

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

JUNE 2023

SIVAN/TAMUZ 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, June 2	TOT SHABBAT SERVICE	5:30 PM
	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, June 3	EXTENDED STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, June 9	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, June 10	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, June 16	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, June 17	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, June 23	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE (ZOOM ONLY)	7:00 PM
Saturday, June 24	TORAH STUDY	9:30 AM
	TORAH SERVICE	10:30 AM
Friday, June 30	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, July 1	EXTENDED STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, July 7	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, July 8	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM

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

B'nai Sholom's 2023 Annual Meeting

The annual meeting will be held on Thursday, June 15, and will begin at 7 PM
6 PM Oak Tree Dedication ~ 6:15 PM Pizza & Salad Dinner

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...

The phrase “this week’s Torah portion” has begun many a sermon. Many of us have come to appreciate the sense of unity that this brings: the concept that, wherever you are in the world, you can walk into any synagogue and hear the same verses of Torah being chanted or discussed on a given week. Unfortunately, that’s not entirely the case...

The idea of our modern Torah reading cycle – where we finish the entire scroll each year – emerged following the Babylonian Exile. The Jews who were living in the land of Israel had a more extended triennial cycle and kept their custom for hundreds of years after Babylonian Jews introduced the condensed version. But even when the annual reading tradition gained popularity and became mainstream, there were still some kinks to work out in the system. For instance, this year, 2023/5783, provides a perfect example of calendar de-synchronization. The holiday of Shavuot has its own assigned Torah portion, as do several other holidays. For Reform Jews and for most Jews of all denominations living in Israel, the holiday lasts one day; this year, it begins the evening of Thursday, May 25 and ends Friday, May 26. In terms of Torah portion disruptions, it’s barely a blip on the radar!

However, for other Jews who live in the Diaspora (outside of Israel), the holiday of Shavuot is celebrated for *two* days. This extends it into Shabbat and the special Torah portions for Shavuot override our ‘regularly scheduled program’ of Shabbat readings. Instead of reading *parashat* Nasso (Num. 4:21-7:89) on May 27, a broad swath of the global Jewish population will defer it to the following week. Their schedule remains one week behind the Reform/Israeli calendar.

So how do we get back on the same page (or parchment)? Each community has its own practice. The Israeli calendar keeps chugging along as scheduled. The Reform calendar slows down to match the rest of the Diaspora cohort: we stretch *parashat* Nasso over two weeks (May 27 and June 3), instead of reading the Shavuot portion on Shabbat. Then we, along with other Diaspora Jews, employ the reverse strategy a month later: combining the portions of Chukat and Balak on the same week (July 1) to catch up with our counterparts in Israel.

Although the logistics can be confusing, I think this calendar conundrum is an excellent exercise in understanding the diversity of our Jewish community. We may have different perspectives and customs, but we all come together in the end.

L’shalom,

Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot

From Our President...

This year, our Annual Meeting will be on Thursday, June 15, at 7 PM. This will mark the end of my first year as President at B'nai Sholom. During the past year, I've learned a few things about myself: I enjoy public speaking, I don't enjoy writing Bulletin articles, and I am not able to keep track of all 27 separate committees at B'nai Sholom! When I learned the average number of committees in congregations like ours is eight, I started working with the Board to develop a restructuring proposal (depicted below). We presented the proposal to committee chairs in April, and some of the new committee groupings started meeting in May. The implementation process will be gradual, so please be patient while we transition to the new structure. Each new committee grouping will transition in their own way and at their own pace. People who used to be committee chairs are now members of leadership teams, and they will help guide the process forward. We'll share more information at the Annual Meeting on June 15. Looking forward to seeing you there!

L'shalom,
Ann Lowenfels

Committee Name	Committee's Core Functions
Community Engagement	Recruit visitors, track and engage prospective members Welcome new members and help them engage Help increase engagement of existing members Support existing members in need Proofread weekly eblasts and pulpit announcements, recruit content for monthly bulletin, prepare flyers for publicity Manage website, press releases, social media and photos Prepare annual guide
Lifelong Learning	Plan adult education programs Oversee our collaborative religious school, B'Yachad Coordinate use of library, acquire/discard books, maintain collection Liaise with our community high school, Mifgash
Facilities Management	Coordinate efforts to maintain and improve our building Coordinate efforts to maintain and improve grounds Coordinate efforts to ensure our building and grounds are as safe as possible Recommend safety procedures and staff training resources Coordinate IT activities for our staff
Social Action/ Social Justice	Advocate for legislation and voting rights Promote literacy Combat homelessness and hunger Address climate change and the environment Advocate for universal health care Participate in other social justice projects
Worship and Related Activities	Schedule onegs and organize related services Coordinate Tot Shabbat program Plan content and format of worship services, coordinate festival events, set times, schedule staff and volunteers Schedule audio/video equipment operators for services
Special Events	Plan Beit Kafeh, concerts and other music events Plan progressive dinner, longevity dinner, volunteer dinner, wine and cheese tasting Plan Rosh Hashanah luncheons Plan open house, BBQ Plan fundraising events Plan annual event for legacy members Schedule guest speakers
Financial and Administrative Services	Monitor income and expenses and draft annual budget Oversee ongoing fundraising projects [different from events] Oversee administration of cemetery plots, legacy contributions, etc.

ANNUAL MEETING

All members of B'nai Sholom are cordially invited to attend.

B'nai Sholom's Annual Meeting on Thursday, June 15, 2023

This event is open to all congregants.

Schedule of Events

6:00 pm: Oak Tree Dedication Ceremony (on-site only)

6:15 pm: Pizza & Salad in the Social Hall (on-site only)

7:00 pm: Annual Meeting in Sanctuary (on-site & on Zoom)

Don't miss the fun!

A Zoom link and all relevant documents will be emailed to congregants before the meeting.

Would **you** be interested in hosting a
Rosh Hashanah Luncheon?

Saturday, September 16, 2023



We will provide invitations, stamps, & assistance coordinating this POTLUCK event. Please contact Katelyn Ouellette DiPaola for more details.

K.Ouellette89@gmail.com or 518-225-2843

B'nai Sholom Rosh Hashanah Luncheons are a longstanding tradition that has been enjoyed by our members and guests for years. It is a wonderful way to visit with other congregants, reconnect with old friends and make new connections.



White Oak Tree Planted on Whitehall Road Side of B'nai Sholom

The Landscape Committee planted a White Oak on the lawn between the building and Whitehall Road this past April. The oak stands for strength and prosperity and celebrates over 50 years since the founding of our congregation.

A White Oak is a keystone plant that benefits the environment by sequestering carbon, providing shade, acting as a home for insects, butterflies and pollinators and supporting over 100 species of caterpillars, which are what birds require to feed their young in spring.

The work was done by Bob Negris, Barry Pendergrass, Martie Teumim and Mari Vosburgh.

Rabbi Weisbrot will dedicate the oak tree prior to the Annual Meeting on June 15. We hope congregants will make a point of getting there early to attend the dedication. See page 4 for Annual Meeting times and more information.

COVID Response Committee Disbands

When CDC started assigning COVID Community Levels to every county in the U.S., B'nai Sholom linked our masking policy to Albany County's Community COVID Level: high levels meant masks were required, medium or low levels meant they were optional.

Because the COVID federal public health emergency ended on May 15, CDC stopped assigning COVID Community Levels. This has prompted B'nai Sholom's COVID Response Committee to disband. Rest assured that leadership will act promptly should another such health emergency arise in the future.

Meanwhile...worship services will continue to be offered in-person and on Zoom, onegs have returned (email k.ouellette89@gmail.com to volunteer to host one) and some committees have resumed in-person meetings (although others have elected to continue meeting on Zoom).

If you have symptoms or are around someone who is sick or has tested positive for COVID, we suggest you wear a mask or use Zoom to participate.

Thank you COVID Response Committee members, for your service to B'nai Sholom throughout this crisis: Ann Lowenfels, Ben Marvin, David Ray, Eric Goldberg, Hana Sullenger, Julie Novkov, Katelyn Ouellette DiPaola, Linda Strohl, Maegan Knauf, Melissa Putterman Hoffmann, Phil Teumim, Rabbi Weisbrot.

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*

Social Action/Social Justice

CAPITAL REGION PRIDE PARADE ON JUNE 11

It's not too late to join in and show your solidarity and support for the LGBTQ community along with an amazing array of diverse groups. Let's let the community know that B'nai Sholom is welcoming to all! We will proudly march again behind our banner, showing our true colors. 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

MONTHLY UPDATES AVAILABLE ON CLIMATE CHANGE AND ENVIRONMENT!!!!

Climate change and the environment are pressing issues, and our cultural and economic practices are evolving in response. Every month the Social Action/Social Justice Committee produces an electronic newsletter summarizing current events including legislation, information and calls to action.

If you want to be included when the Climate and Environment newsletter of B'nai Sholom is distributed, email Barry Pendergrass bpenderg37@gmail.com.

WHAT'S YOUR CARBON FOOTPRINT? ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES NOW AVAILABLE

At the Social Action/Social Justice Shabbat on April 28, Barry Pendergrass spoke about the urgency to combat climate change. He educated us about the national and state legislative actions as well as what was accomplished (or omitted) in the New York State Budget for the upcoming year. Committee members prepared a great resource guide with links to information about induction stoves, heat pump dryers, electric cars and more. You can access this information and "hot links" on the B'nai Sholom website. **Go to: bnaisholomalbany.org, then click on "Get Involved" and select "Social Action/Social Justice."**

Social Action/Social Justice (continued)

CLOTHING DRIVE BENEFITS GRASSROOT GIVERS

Congregants purged their closets, and bags and bags and bags of clothing were transported to Grassroot Givers at the end of our Spring Clothing Drive. Thanks to Jesse Dinkin for all the hauling!

If you are not familiar with Grassroot Givers, it is a wonderful organization that redistributes household essentials, personal care products and more for free to anyone in need. By redistributing goods and resources already in our community, Grassroot Givers provides access to clothing and essential household items that improve quality of life for individuals and families experiencing poverty. Grassroot Givers also believes there should be books for every child and aims to spark a love for books in children and adults across the Capital Region. They accept donations of like-new books and put them back into our community through programs such as Little Free Library and more.

To see when and how to donate, please visit: <https://www.grassrootgivers.org/>

xxx

A FEW MINUTES WITH THE TORAH

Spotlighting the outstanding d'verei Torah written and delivered by congregants. Ben Marvin shared some thoughts with us while leading services March 17.

At the risk of my d'var coming across as "My Jewish Journey" or "The Bar Mitzvah Speech I Never Gave," I'm going to use the next couple of minutes to pose and address a question.

In Judaism, we dwell on the anniversaries of the deaths of our ancestors and those who were important in our lives. But we spend very little time memorializing their births, even of those who were important to the perpetuation of our faith. How come?

To illustrate what I mean, I'll use the example of my father Earl.

Dad was raised Conservative, while my mother was raised Reform. Dad switched and embraced Reform Judaism. In the early 1950s when my parents moved from New York City to Woodmere, one of the so-called Five Towns on Long Island, they joined Temple Israel in Lawrence, basically the Beth Emeth of the Five Towns. Soon afterward, Dad grew disenchanted with Temple Israel and joined with some congregants who wanted to break off and form a smaller, more welcoming and more *heimish* congregation. Sound familiar? Thus, my dad was one of the founders of Temple Sinai of Long Island, the shul where my brother, sister and I grew up (and, as I learned just a couple of years ago, the temple where Rabbi Katz's wife Nancy grew up – I love Jewish Geography!).

(Continued on page 9.)

(Continued from page 8.)

Dad was involved in hiring the new temple's rabbi and cantor. My sister was the first baby named in Temple Sinai; mine was the first confirmation class to have more boys than girls. For years Dad served on the temple board and as the temple's treasurer, he counseled the leadership as an attorney, he arranged for donations of items and getaways to be sold at the annual bazaar, he took us to Shabbat services regularly and saw to it that we got jelly apples at Rosh Hashanah. I can remember him sitting up on the bimah every High Holiday, looking like he felt it was a chore but something that was important to do – and I remember feeling just a little bit of delight seeing that my father was "important."

One thing he never did, though, was be temple president. I mean, you have to be crazy to do THAT job (as a few people in this room can attest to).

Was my father a Moses? No...he never considered himself to be a "super Jew" – just a Jew who collected donations of gifts and those who were skilled to help build the temple...basically, whatever was needed to ensure that Temple Sinai succeeded.

(As an aside, there's a book in our temple library that tells some of the story of Temple Sinai and the rabbi who succeeded the one I grew up with. It's called "Amen: The Diary of Rabbi Martin Siegel" and while my dad doesn't factor into the book, Rabbi Katz's wife's confirmation class does and I remember people whom Rabbi Siegel names.)

So why am I telling you this?

Every year, we mark the anniversary of Dad's 1991 passing by saying kaddish and making a contribution to B'nai Sholom. Today isn't his yahrtzeit. Yet, not once have we marked or celebrated the anniversary of his 1918 birth. I know others have marked anniversaries of births by making kibbutznik contributions but without reciting a prayer in the synagogue. So tonight, I'm going to fix that.

You see, today is not only St. Patrick's Day; it's the 105th anniversary of my father's birth. Years ago, I asked whether it was appropriate to say Shehechayanu in the middle of a service or must it be said only at designated times. The answer I got back: it is always appropriate to say Shehechayanu.

So to honor someone who still manages to enter my thoughts just about every day, I will say the only blessing I know that truly celebrates life...and I invite others who've had anniversaries of a loved one's birth recently to join me.

[Shehechayanu]

In closing, I ask this question: how come don't we do this more regularly.

Yeah, how come?

Shabbat shalom!

The Congregation Notes with Thanks These Contributions:

General Fund

In honor of **Bruce Goldstein's birthday from his sister** by Lorrie Van Akkeren
In memory of **Samuel Rauch** by Judy and Roy Fruiterman
In memory of **Dorothy Lazoroff** by The Family of Dorothy Lazoroff
In memory of **Francis F. L. Dobris** by The Family of Francis Dobris
In memory of **Herbert Horowitz** by Barney Horowitz
In memory of **Gerry Green** by Ellie and Randy Davis
In memory of **Mildy Fischel** by Cheryl and Mark Reeder
In memory of **Glory Schwartz** by Barbara and Jack Devore

Technology Fund

In honor of Bruce Goldstein **for the time and expertise he gives to B'nai Sholom's website and in honor of his birthday** by Edith Goldstein

The following Yahrzeits will be observed in June:

6/2 Jerome Hoffmann*; Morris Friedman; Philip Haas; Cleone Owen; Rae Spitalnic*;
Joseph Finkelstein*; Earl Marvin; Lena Rosenblatt*; Ernst Swiwcz; Werner P. Frankel;
Dorothy Raderman; Jack Raderman; Marion Goldstein*

6/9 Hal Rosenthal*; Bea Fogel; Donald Putterman*; B. Howard Savitt; Jacob Aronson*;
Gertrude Einstein*; Edward Shapiro; Nathan Hess*; Julius Golderman

6/16 Sol Gordon; Ronald Kaplan; John Samuels; Dora Edelman; Ralph Owen; Martin
Gilsenberg; Lorena Abrams*

6/23 Mildy Fischel; Gerry Green; Selma Jarett; Martin Neuburger; Isadore T. Jaffe*
Jeannette Lubitch Katz; Mary Finnan Blakeslee; Jennie Dubb*; Bernard Herbert

6/30 Minerva Knee; Rubin Fiegelson*; Ilene Goldman; Lynn Horowitz; Saul Ikler; Cindy
Berkowitz*; Janet Samuels Greenbaum*; Samuel Englander*; Buehl Ray; Soloman
Dachman

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

The congregation mourns the passing of

Mindy Kramer

A longtime B'nai Sholom congregant

May her memory forever be for a blessing

B'NAI SHOLOM WELCOMES THE B'YACHAD COMMUNITY

On Friday, May 5, B'Yachad hosted a Shabbat dinner at B'nai Sholom. More than 40 parents and students from Ohav Shalom and B'nai Sholom were joined by their teachers and director Ruth Malka. Rabbi Weisbrot led the group in candle lighting, parental blessing of the children, kiddush, motzi and birkat hamazon, and everyone enjoyed a delicious meal catered by 518Kosher. The B'Yachad community then joined us for Shabbat services, where Rabbi Weisbrot delivered a special, student-oriented d'var Torah. Services were concluded by the students ascending the bimah for the closing song.

Special thanks to B'Yachad president, our congregant Joel Bloom, for serving as cantorial soloist, as well as all the B'nai Sholom volunteers who organized, served and cleaned up the festive dinner.

RABBI: Danielle Weisbrot can be reached at rabiweisbrot@bnaisholom.albany.ny.us

RABBI EMERITUS: Donald P. Cashman

PRESIDENT: Ann Lowenfels can be reached at annlowenfels@gmail.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 2nd 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>
July.....	June 14
August.....	July 12