

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

420 WHITEHALL RD., ALBANY, NY 12208

E-mail: office@bnaisholomalbany.org

March 2024

Phone: 518-482-5283

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

Adar I/Adar II 5784

***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 1	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, March 2	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, March 8	TOT SHABBAT SERVICE	5:30 PM
	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, March 9	EXTENDED STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, March 15	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, March 16	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, March 22	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE (ZOOM ONLY)	7:00 PM
Saturday, March 23	TORAH STUDY	9:30 AM
	PURIM POTLUCK & COSTUME PARADE	5:30 PM
	MEGILLAH READING	7:00 PM
Friday, March 29	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE: FOUNDERS' DAY	7:00 PM
Saturday, March 30	EXTENDED 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.

From Our Rabbi...

Every so often, I am invited to participate in “denominations night” for the local Introduction to Judaism class run through the Capital District Board of Rabbis and Cantors. Rabbi Kasman, who teaches the class, gathers local representatives from different Jewish movements and invites us to share some of the nuances of our traditions and practices. When I spoke most recently, Rabbi Kasman carefully reminded the students who I was representing: the *Reform* Movement, not the *Reformed* Movement. In a continually evolving world, we never believe the process of transformation is completed; we continue to grow, change and adapt over time and our Jewish practice follows suit.

Of course, you could make the case – and a strong one at that! – that this is the experience of *all* of Judaism, not just Reform. There is a famous midrash in the Talmud (Menachot 29b) in which Moses travels to the future to meet Rabbi Akiva. When he is transported to Rabbi Akiva’s study house, Moses doesn’t recognize any of the laws and teachings they are discussing at first. Eventually, though, he realizes that it all traces back to the source at Mt. Sinai and has simply evolved over time.

On **Friday, March 29**, we will play Moses for a night (though without the time travel). We’ll have an opportunity to reflect on the history and ongoing legacy of Reform Judaism. This year, it’s B’nai Sholom’s turn to host the Founders’ Day festivities! We will gather with the other Reform congregations in the Capital District to honor the founders of several central institutions of American Reform Judaism: Rabbi Isaac Mayer Wise and Rabbi Stephen S. Wise. Between them, they helped establish the Union of American Hebrew Congregations (now the Union for Reform Judaism); Hebrew Union College and the Jewish Institute of Religion (now merged as HUC-JIR); and the Central Conference of American Rabbis. We’ll also have the privilege of learning from our guest speaker, **Dr. Gary P. Zola**, executive director emeritus of the Jacob Rader Marcus Center of the American Jewish Archives.

I look forward to seeing you there and celebrating our thriving Reform community!

L’shalom,

Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot

Be On Guard Against Email/Text Spoofing Scams

STAY ALERT! If you see a suspicious email or text message that claims to come from Rabbi Weisbrot or someone else at B’nai Sholom, double-check the email address or phone number 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 message to the correct address or number for the supposed sender or call them directly to confirm.

By-laws Amendments Pass at Special Congregational Meeting

On January 30, the Board of Trustees convened a special meeting at the request of the Nominating Committee to consider two amendments to the by-laws. At the meeting, the congregation approved the amendments that will increase the pool of eligible nominees who can serve as trustees and help support those serving in senior leadership roles.

The first amendment adds two optional positions: co-president and co-president elect. In years where we elect co-presidents and/or co-presidents elect, the individuals in the positions will divide responsibilities based on personal strengths and preferences. For example, one co-president could enjoy representing the synagogue at public meetings while the other prefers administrative responsibilities. One may spend several months in another state and the other will cover in-person duties.

The other amendment allows non-Jewish congregants to serve on the board and to serve as vice president, finance vice president, treasurer and secretary. Consistent with our commitment to inclusivity, non-Jewish family members of Jewish members who have actively supported and participated in our community will now be able to increase their involvement.

The meeting featured a lively and heartfelt discussion of who we are and where we are going in the future. Both amendments passed by wide margins. The Nominating Committee is currently considering the new options as it develops the Board of Trustees slate for presentation at the June 2024 annual meeting.

Many thanks to the Nominating Committee for the time devoted to research and listening to what congregants had to say, and to the B'nai Sholom members who provided valuable feedback.

Thanks for Tu BiShvat Food Donations!

THANK YOU to everyone who donated food in response to our Tu BiShvat request. And a big *THANK YOU* to Melissa Browne and Mary Warrener for taking the donated items to the Regional Food Bank.

New Way to Contribute: The DONATE Button

Did you know there's a great new way to donate to B'nai Sholom? It's the DONATE button on the website. This is a safe alternative to sending checks through the mail, and you can use this button for all your donations, including but not limited to the Rabbi's Discretionary Fund, Endowment Fund, Social Action Fund and tributes (but not temple dues – at least not yet). We're excited to offer this alternative and hope you explore it and the new website at www.bnaisholomalbany.org.

Caring Community: Helping to Help Each Other

When a congregant is experiencing a time of stress such as an illness, a death in the family or a new baby, B'nai Sholom's Caring Community offers a helping hand.

But the Caring Community can't do that without you.

We need congregants to sign up for the "on call" list to cook, to drive a fellow congregant to a medical appointment or to attend a minyan during shiva. Signing up does not mean you have to do it when it is not convenient. It means we can call and ask.

If you are willing to help in times of need, please contact Nancy Maurer by email: nancymaurer5@gmail.com

Don't delay, reach out today.

"On three things does the world stand: On Torah, on worship and on deeds of lovingkindness." Pirkei Avot 1:2

You Could Have So Much Fun!

Come shop with me. We can stroll up and down the aisles and find so much joy in choosing the perfect fresh produce and dairy, healthy snacks and beverages. Let's find nutritious food for adults and kids and then sort and deliver it to three Free Food Fridges in Albany.

Sound like something that you may want to be part of? If you would like to spend about three hours with an experienced Free Food Fridge shopper and distributor, please contact Valerie Tabak or Becky Marvin. The only requirement is that you want to be part of a truly rewarding experience. Our next shop will be in April.

We thank all who continue to support this wonderful gift to our neighbors in Albany. Please include your donation to the Free Food Fridge fund when you choose to remember a loved one or honor a special person or occasion. Food is such a rich part of our culture.

*******SPECIAL EVENTS*******

MOVIE NIGHT

"THE LEVYS OF MONTICELLO"

SATURDAY, MARCH 9, at 7:30 PM

When Thomas Jefferson died in 1826, he left behind a mountain of personal debt, which forced his heirs to sell his beloved Monticello home and all its possessions. "The Levys of Monticello" (2022) is a documentary that tells the little-known story of the Levy family, which owned and carefully preserved Monticello for nearly a century – far longer than Jefferson or his descendants. The remarkable story of the Levy family also intersects with the rise of antisemitism that runs throughout the course of American history.

There will be a \$5 admission fee. Non-members are requested to pre-register via the website link.

ZOOM WITH BEST SELLING AUTHOR

TOVA MIRVIS

WEDNESDAY, APRIL 3, at 7:15 PM

On April 3, B'nai Sholom will host via Zoom author Tova Mirvis as she discusses her memoir, *The Book of Separation*. Mirvis's book traces her journey away from her Modern Orthodox upbringing, as she leaves both a marriage and the religious community of which she was a part. She also describes the struggle to find her footing in an unfamiliar secular world while still keeping one foot in the Orthodox world for the sake of her children and stepping with the other into a new and emerging way of expressing her Judaism and living her life. Mirvis's memoir was a *New York Times Book Review* Editor's Choice and was excerpted in the *Times's* "Modern Love" column. *Lillith Magazine* called it "beautiful and poignant."

Mirvis also is the author of three novels, *Visible City*, *The Outside World* and *The Ladies Auxiliary*, which was a national bestseller. Her essays have appeared in many publications including the *Washington Post*, *Boston Globe Magazine* and *Psychology Today* and her fiction has been broadcast on NPR.

Please join us for this special event, which is open to members of the B'nai Sholom community and friends. Multiple copies of Mirvis's books are available in both the synagogue library and the local library system. Contact Barney Horowitz at horowitz28@verizon.net for more information.

Longevity Shabbat and Potluck Dinner
Honoring "Chai-Plus" Members
May 10, 2024

B'nai Sholom invites you to join us for our biannual Longevity Shabbat service and potluck dinner on May 10, 2024, to honor those who have been members of B'nai Sholom for 18 years and beyond. We gratefully dedicate this Shabbat to our longstanding members, acknowledging their contributions of continuity to our synagogue family.

You will receive a written invitation around mid-April, telling you about the potluck dinner at 6:00 PM, followed by a 7:30 service.

Please go online to let us know your meal contribution (there will be instructions in the invitation). You'll need to supply beverages and place settings for your family.

While this event specifically honors longtime members, all are welcome to attend the dinner and, of course, the service.

Arrangements provided by the Member Events Team

Our Recent Kibbutzniks

Eric, Maxine and Ethan Goldberg – In memory of Rose Goldberg

Thank You!

...to the fantastic Bulletin Brigade who fold and stuff the monthly Bulletins: Jim and Joan Savitt, Martha Rozett, Martie Teumim, Rema Goldstein, Anita Stein, Barbara Devore, Joe DeFronzo, Amy Sternstein, Deb Adler and Cheryl and Mark Reeder.

...to the following congregants who recently hosted an oneg Shabbat or kiddush lunch: Lois Gordon, Susan Radosh and Joan Savitt.

The following Yahrts will be observed in March:

3/1; Ruth Warshaw*; Samuel Strohl; Lena Semelisky*; Morris Wagner*; Frances K. Singer*; Ida Roth*; Samuel Joseph Zuckerman; Alfred Cohen; Elsie Meer; Julie Lawrence*; Donald Wexler*

3/8; Shirley Dean; Avi Ezra; Paul Rosenthal; Jonas Bernstein*; Stanley Levy; Murray Maurer; Jerome Morse; Abe Rudman; Gertrude Fass; Samuel Caplan*; Harold Nozik; Irma Weiss

3/15; Mitchell Burkowsky; Barry Brody; Evelyn Rosen; Albert Blakeslee*; Lazar Kleinfeld; Sylvia Lande; Izadore Pollack

3/22; Judith Klein; Louis Schaffer; Benjamin Steinhart; George Kurak; Max Rosen

3/29; Doris Stephany; Dora Stein; Samuel Berman*; Richard Rosenthal; Helga Bessac; Samuel Adels*; Herman Reichbach; Adele C. Blumenthal

4/5; Harry C. Katzin*; Lillian Oblas*; Leonarda Defronzo

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

The Congregation Notes with Thanks These Contributions:

General Fund

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

In memory of **Hilda Smith, Bernard Smith, Morris Alowitz, Sylvia Alowitz Brownstein** by Arthur and Rita Alowitz

Free Food Fridges

Laurie Shanks; Rabbi's Discretionary Fund

Vera Propp Literacy Fund

In memory of **Eleanor Marvin** by Becky and Ben Marvin

Onegs Are Back in Full Swing! Want to Host One?

Do you have a wedding anniversary, birthday or yahrtzeit to honor? Hosting an Oneg is one way to share your joy or remembrance with your friends in the B'nai Sholom community. Hosting is simple: provide food and beverages that the community can share after Shabbat services while everyone socializes. If you have an upcoming event to celebrate, or a loved one to honor in a special way, please sign up online to host an Oneg at our SignUpGenius site using the link found in the Weekly E-announcements. You will be able to check the dates for which hosts are needed. If there are open dates, the committee will reach out to congregants to inquire about hosting. If you have any questions or need the sign-up link sent to you, please contact Laura Kaplan at lckaplan79@gmail.com.

RABBI: Danielle Weisbrot can be reached at rabbi@bnaisholomalbany.org

RABBI EMERITUS: Donald P. Cashman

PRESIDENT: Ann Lowenfels can be reached at annlowenfels@gmail.com

OFFICE MANAGER: Emily Pickering can be reached at office@bnaisholomalbany.org

OFFICE HOURS: TUE/WED/THURS/FRI 9:30 AM–4:00 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.

Period Covered

Deadline

April

March 13

May

April 10