

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

420 WHITEHALL RD., ALBANY, NY 12208

E-mail: office@bnaisholomalbany.org

May 2024

Phone: 518-482-5283

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

Nisan/Iyyar 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, May 3	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE WITH B'YACHAD	7:00 PM
Saturday, May 4	EXTENDED STUDY OF THE PROPHETS	10:00 AM
Friday, May 10	LONGEVITY DINNER	6:00 PM
	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:30 PM
Saturday, May 11	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, May 17	TOT SHABBAT	5:30 PM
	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, May 18	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, May 24	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, May 25	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, May 31	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, June 1	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.

From Our Rabbi...

The Jewish calendar is a mathematical phenomenon based on cycles within cycles. Within the year, we have our holidays and festivals and complete the reading of the Torah on schedule. Within each week, we have workdays and Shabbat and the rhythm of daily prayer.

The complicated math is generally done by professionals – those whom we trust to calculate exactly which seven out of every 19 years is a leap year (like this one), where we add an extra month to the calendar to keep the holidays in their proper seasons (e.g. Passover in the spring, Sukkot in the fall).

At this time of year, we engage in math that is a little more accessible to the masses: the counting of the Omer. Starting on the second day of Passover, we count down to Shavuot, the celebration of the Revelation at Sinai. We mark each of the 49 days with a blessing and then recite the day we are up to, using the standard formula. For example, the night of May 1, we would say: Today is nine days, which is one week and two days of the Omer. The process marks the beginning of the barley harvest, when new grain is just becoming available, when, in the days of the Temple, offerings were made to the priests, and when anxious farmers would wait to find out how the year ahead would go for them. Day by day, they would count, watch, and wait.

This year, we are all doing additional calculus of our own. Counting the days, weeks, months since October 7 (and over two years since Russia invaded Ukraine). Counting the number of hostages still waiting to be redeemed; calculating how many of them may still be alive. For many, counting the days of shiva, sh'loshim, and shanah in mourning for those lost. Numbering the rockets as they fly in from multiple directions. Lamenting the bitter math of war as we count the number of Palestinian civilians killed; the number of children without food. We count, watch, and wait – hoping for a year of growth and new life. We look forward to the conclusion of the counting, when we can once again celebrate standing together as a community, starting a new cycle of peace.

L'shalom,

Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot

From Our President...

I haven't written a Bulletin article since the war between Israel and Hamas began. My thoughts are so complicated and my emotions are so conflicted that I find it almost impossible to put anything on paper. Right after October 7, I attended a forum organized by the Jewish Federation of Northeastern New York. As I sat with hundreds of people and listened to speakers from throughout the Capital Region, I started to realize how divisive the situation was going to become. Since then, I've been watching with horror as the plot unfolds in real time – bringing death, destruction and suffering to all parties involved. Here at home, the war has revealed significant divisions within our own community. We find ourselves struggling to understand and explain the differences between supporting Judaism, supporting Zionism and supporting decisions made by Israel's current majority coalition. After attending a series of webinars sponsored by the Union for Reform Judaism, I've realized that congregational leaders need to keep their synagogues moving forward – even during difficult times. We need to continue providing opportunities for people to study ancient texts and Jewish values, to conduct acts of lovingkindness, to pray for peace and to help repair the world.

So I have been trying to focus my attention on congregational life here at B'nai Sholom. Since my last Bulletin article, the office manager position has transitioned from Christine Blackman (who retired in October) to Emily Pickering (who started working at B'nai in November). We have hosted several national speakers including Rabbi Lauren Tuchman, Martin Fletcher and Dr. Gary P. Zola (February and March). We also held a special congregational meeting and voted to enlarge the pool of congregants who are eligible to sit on our Board of Trustees. After that meeting, the Nominating Committee identified three new nominees for next year's Board: Melissa Putterman Hoffmann for President, David Liebschutz for Finance Vice President and Maxine Goldberg for a seat on the board. The congregation will have an opportunity to consider the entire slate of nominees at our Annual Meeting on June 27.

And now it is Passover, my favorite Jewish holiday. Some of us have been revisiting old, familiar traditions. Others have been revising, and building new traditions. Most of us have experienced a combination of both old and new. One way or another, I hope everyone has an opportunity to connect with Passover's powerful messages.

Chag Sameach!

Ann Lowenfels

Save the Date!

B'nai Sholom's Annual Meeting: Thursday, June 27, 7:00 PM

Multi-access – Live in the Sanctuary and via Zoom

Watch for more information in the coming weeks. Before the meeting, you will receive an email with the agenda and handouts.

Refugee Welcome Center Needs Art Supplies

The West Hill Refugee Center needs art supplies for their children's program. We will collect art supplies (please, no broken bits of crayons and dried out markers) at the same time as our spring clothing drive: May 14-17 when the building is open, and again on Sunday, May 19, from 11 AM to 1 PM.

Here are the most wanted items:

Model Magic Air Dry Clay...a real favorite of the kids!

Kinetic sand (tan)

Prang or Crayola Watercolor sets (8 colors and NOT washable)

Camson watercolor paper

Black Sharpies – fine tip or dual tip

Whiteboard markers

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 be sure to 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, MAY 14 through FRIDAY, MAY 17 *WHEN THE BUILDING IS OPEN***

Or on

SUNDAY, MAY 19, 11 AM to 1 PM.

*****Please place them neatly in the marked classroom and do not leave bags outside the building. Thank you!***

"Every Voice Every Vote" Postcard Campaign

The Religious Action Center (RAC) of the Union for Reform Judaism has launched its **Every Voice Every Vote** postcard campaign. These postcards are non-partisan and do not endorse candidates or political parties. They are aimed at ensuring that all voters have accurate and up-to-date information about voter registration and election deadlines. There have been concerted efforts to suppress voting rights in many states, and one or more of these states and/or localities will be the target(s) for a new campaign each month until the November election.

The Social Action/Social Justice Committee will be coordinating the efforts of our congregation in this important work. We will purchase cards and stamps each month, organize writing "parties" and distribute cards to at-home writers. Our first batch of cards arrived in late April.

If you are interested in helping (at least once) in this vital effort, please contact one of these congregants:

Lois Gordon rgordon1@nycap.rr.com

Valerie Tabak walksing53@gmail.com

Becky Marvin beckymarvin4574@gmail.com

Our Jewish tradition is clear: "A ruler is not to be appointed unless the community is first consulted." (Babylonian Talmud Berachot 55a).

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

When I Think About My Mom...

I can't help but think about her utter disinterest in cooking.

We would go to the A&P and buy Arnold white bread, because it had "substance to it," fish, because it was "cheap," frozen concentrated canned orange juice, to which we then added 3 cans of water, and whatever else she had on her list.

The *real* grocery shopping occurred when the weekend arrived and my dad, the original foodie, would go to the bakery in Spring Valley and flirt with Mrs. Pakula, purchase a delicious assortment of pastries, hot sliced rye bread, and then be on his way to the Mecca of delis, the one inside Shoppers Paradise.

Whitefish, chubs, lox, you name it, they had it and he bought it!

We didn't go out to dinner very often. The China Pearl on a Sunday every now and then was a big deal. I can still see those shiny metal serving dishes with the domed lids. Ordering a pizza was the treat of treats. Thin crust and delicious sauce.

As a child, I never knew how much money my parents earned, as they discussed money matters in the secret language of Yiddish. What I did know was that we were not wealthy, we were not poor, and I **never** went without a meal. There was always something to eat, even when my older brother would proclaim, "there's nothing to eat in this house."

Do you have childhood memories about food? Do any of them involve hunger? Were you ever sent to bed without dinner as a punishment? Sadly, there are children living near B'nai Sholom whose families suffer from food insecurity. They rely on support from various programs whose funding has been cut; the cost of food has not.

We ask you to consider making a donation to the **Free Food Fridges Fund**. Buying an extra Hannaford card from the Fundraising Team creates a double mitzvah. Every other month, your donations are used to purchase fresh fruits, vegetables, dairy, healthy snacks and beverages for families who frequent the Free Food Fridges located throughout Albany.

Thank you, B'nai Sholom. Enjoy a slice of Arnold white bread and a pastry for my parents!

Valerie Tabak

Capital Region Pride Parade Steps Off June 9

Come and join other congregants to show your solidarity and support for the LGBTQ+ community. Let's let the Capital District know that B'nai Sholom is welcoming to all! We will proudly march again behind our banner, showing our true colors.

As parking is difficult that day, please let Becky Marvin know if you plan to attend so we can coordinate carpools: beckymarvin4574@gmail.com

Now on our Website: 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.



LONGEVITY SHABBAT & POTLUCK DINNER



By now, our Chai-Plus members have received invitations to this May 10 event.

While you're contributing to the meal and bringing your own beverages and place settings, we still need to know whether you plan to come and what you'll bring, to ensure adequate food and seating. Gifts will be given out at the dinner, instead of at the service, and we may have a group activity at the dinner as well.

We look forward to seeing as many of our long-time members at this special evening as possible, and – of course – any other congregants who wish to attend!

B'nai Sholom Legacy Society

Ensuring the Future
of B'nai Sholom ...



... Creating a Jewish Legacy Today.

Please Join Us for a Legacy Reception

to recognize and honor Legacy Society members
and learn how they are already benefiting B'nai Sholom

Thursday, May 23, 2024, 5:30 to 7:00 p.m.
Home of David Ray and Mimi Bruce

All congregants are invited and encouraged to
attend!

RSVP by Thursday, May 16 (using link in weekly announcements)
Questions? Contact Mimi Bruce at mbrucemd53@gmail.com or 518-469-9554

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

REDI 101 Training (Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion)

May 9, 2024 – 7-8:30 PM on Zoom

Sponsored by the Inclusivity Collaborative, we will host a REDI 101 training exclusively for B'nai Sholom members and facilitated by staff from the Union for Reform Judaism's Audacious Hospitality department.

Please join us in the effort to foster and support an inclusive environment at B'nai Sholom. Sign up at <https://forms.gle/rd2RhoqfyLCN934z6> or use the link in the Weekly E-announcements.

As some background information, here is a description of Audacious Hospitality from the URJ website:

What is Audacious Hospitality?

Audacious Hospitality is the Reform Jewish Movement's focused effort on Racial Equity, Diversity and Inclusion (REDI) work.

The URJ acknowledges that due to racism, ableism, homophobia and other forms of oppression, our communities are not whole until everyone experiences a sense of belonging within the Jewish community. As a movement, we stand for a Judaism that is inclusive and reflective of a wide range of identities and accept the responsibility of dismantling oppression both inside and outside of our communities.

Audacious Hospitality is a transformative spiritual practice rooted in the belief that we will be a stronger, more vibrant Jewish community when we fully incorporate the diversity that is the reality of modern Jewish life. We believe that there is more than one authentic way to be Jewish and acknowledge that our diversity is an essential component to making our communities whole.

A few years ago, the B'nai Sholom Board of Trustees voted to bring the initiative of Audacious Hospitality to our synagogue, and from there we formed the Inclusivity Collaborative to promote it. Part of the Inclusivity Collaborative's mission is to offer educational opportunities for the B'nai Sholom community to learn more about REDI. The training offered here is an introduction to REDI and a way to begin the conversation of how we bring this to B'nai Sholom.

The May 9 training is open to everyone in the B'nai Sholom community. Because we want to create a space where people feel comfortable sharing openly, this training will not be recorded.

Hope to see you there!

Our Recent Kibbutzniks

Joe DeFronzo - Honoring the choir on Founders' Day: Rabbi Weisbrot, Susan Aron, Ellen Blake, Josh Cooper-Ginsburg, Judy Fruiterman, Lois Gordon, Gay Griffith, Lene Hausgaard, Libby Liebschutz, Marna Schwartz, Doug Smith, Mari Vosburgh and a very special thank you to Roy Fruiterman. "Let us Continue..."

Amy Sternstein - In Honor of Rabbi Weisbrot, Ann Lowenfels, the Board of Trustees and the B'nai Sholom choir for all their hard work in putting together an amazing Founders' Day celebration.

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: Joe DeFronzo; Ann Lowenfels.

The congregation mourns the recent passing of

Feige Marion Brody, mother of Mark Brody
David Goldfarb, father of Rochelle Goldfarb
Virginia Hazard, mother of Brenda Hazard
Gail P. Ryan-Tannen, wife of Kenneth Tannen

May their memories forever be for a blessing.

The following Yahrzeits will be observed in May:

5/3: Sidney Devore; William Lacov; Lena Wolf*; Lieselotte Weiner

5/10: Cecelia Zimmelman*; Ron Royne; Fay Levinn; George Rudinger; Daisy Belasen; Murray Talanker; Hedy Zimra Suraski; Carla Oblas; Samuel Bach*; Anna Liff*; Louis Samuel Harris; Renee Stoller; Moses Khazam

5/17: Gordan Goldstein; Mel Lee; Claire Roth; Minnie Velk*; Dorothy Lazoroff*; Glory Swartz; Hanna Aron; Aaron Harold Rosner

5/24: Alan Berke*; Louis Rosenblatt*; Bernard Shanks; Gertrude Sperber; Sophie Goldstein*; Herbert Horowitz; Hyman Tress; Edgar Altmayer; Helaine K. Plaut; Meyer Tabak; Ida Domfort*

5/31: Elaine H. Neuburger; George Singer*; Rabbi Bernard Bloom; Frances F. Lazoroff Dobris*; Rose Rogers Singer*; Hyman W. Zima*; Carol Winston

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

The Congregation Notes with Thanks These Contributions:

General Fund

In Memory of **David Goldfarb and Virginia Hazard** by Ellie and Randy Davis

In Memory of **Rhoda Green** by Ellie and Randy Davis

In Memory of **Caleb Reeder Sr. and Judy Reeder** by Mark and Cheryl Reeder

In Memory of **Sidney Devore** by Barbara and Jack Devore

In Memory of **David Goldfarb** by Amy Sternstein

In Memory of **Hyman Tress** by Marcia Tress

In Memory of **Frances Dobris and Dorothy Lazaroff** by Jan Dobris

In Honor of the birth of **Hazel Ann Brighman-Tress** by Marcia Tress

Circle of Life Fund

In Memory of **Edward J. Blumenthal and Adele C. Blumenthal** by Joel Blumenthal and Dayle Zatlín

Mishloach Manot

Kerry Kurtus; Lori Stuart; Martie and Phil Teumim; David and Libby Liebschutz

Rabbi Discretionary Fund

Joe DeFronzo

In Memory of **David Goldfarb** by Gail Golderman and Rochelle Goldfarb

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.

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

June

May 8

July

June 12