

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

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August 2025

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Visit us at <https://www.bnaisholomalbany.org>
Av/Elul 5785

***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, August 1	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, August 2	EXTENDED STUDY OF THE PROPHETS (HYBRID)	10:00 AM
Friday, August 8	TOT SHABBAT	5:30 PM
	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, August 9	TORAH STUDY (ZOOM)	10:00 AM
Friday, August 15	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, August 16	TORAH STUDY (ZOOM)	10:00 AM
Friday, August 22	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, August 23	TORAH STUDY (ZOOM)	10:00 AM
Friday, August 29	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE (ZOOM)	7:00 PM
Saturday, August 30	TORAH STUDY (ZOOM)	9:30 AM
	SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE	10:30 AM
Friday, September 4	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, September 5	EXTENDED STUDY OF THE PROPHETS (HYBRID)	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...

On the first day of our new Teen B'nai Mitzvah class (more to come on that later!), we did a quick reflection on what it means to be a Jewish adult. One of the first things the students mentioned was fasting on Yom Kippur. It's not surprising that this came up so quickly. It's physical, noticeable, concrete – and, especially if you've never tried it before – can seem like a big undertaking.

At sundown on August 2, though, we begin the only other full-day fast on the Jewish calendar: Tisha b'Av (the 9th of the month of Av). While the food and water and enjoyment restrictions are similar for those who can safely observe them, the two holidays are otherwise fairly different. Yom Kippur is mentioned in the Torah and in the Rabbinic mind is considered to be a happy holiday. We spend the month of Elul and the 10-day stretch from Rosh Hashanah to Yom Kippur reflecting on the past year, making amends with anyone we've hurt, and identifying what we'd like to change in ourselves. By the end of the 24-hour window of the holiday itself, we should be feeling a sense of uplift after having cleared our consciences of past wrongs and recommitted ourselves to a better year ahead.

Tisha b'Av, however, is focused on intentionally wallowing in our grief. We begin three weeks earlier, at the 17th of Tammuz (a *half-day* fast, for those who observe it), starting the descent into sadness. We also don't spring back into joy as quickly, because the reflections we sit with on Tisha b'Av are not ones we can easily control or change. The holiday started by marking the destruction of the Temple in Jerusalem and has since become a landing-place for generations of communal trauma – from the first trains leaving for Auschwitz to the 1994 bombing of the AMIA Jewish community center in Buenos Aires, Argentina.

I'd venture to say that most Reform Jews don't fast on – or/ even pay much attention to –Tisha b'Av. Since the Reform Movement doesn't advocate for rebuilding the Temple and returning to the priestly sacrifices, we typically haven't invested as much energy in lamenting its destruction. But, fasting or not, I think we are all too aware of the concept of communal grief. As I looked over my August articles for the last few years, I realized that there was always some fresh pain to mention, from the overturning of *Roe v Wade* to October 7. And we can still find things to mourn every day, especially as we witness the ever-worsening crisis of the Israel-Gaza war, where Israeli hostages still languish in tunnels, bombs continue to fall, and the aid shortage in Gaza makes going without food a harsh reality rather than a spiritual choice.

Because the focus of Tisha b'Av is so different from Yom Kippur, its "recovery period" is different too. We take longer to resurface and it's a slower process. Instead of 24 hours, we take seven weeks, listening regularly to words of comfort and consolation. And unlike the High Holy Days, where our work is primarily individual and internal, after Tisha b'Av we heal as a community. The words of the prophet Isaiah are a command in the plural form: *Nachamu, nachamu ami*. Take comfort, take comfort, my people (Isaiah 40:1). It's hard work, but its achievable as a community because, no matter the source of our grief, we continue to support each other through it.

L'shalom,

Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot

From Our President...

What I love most about coming to services at B'nai Sholom is being with others who – like me – want to worship or sing or visit or do all of the above. I love the way we are happy to see each other, to be together and to welcome those who are new to us. It's the warmth of our synagogue community that keeps me coming back. And it's the warmth of the current temperature in the Sanctuary and Social Hall that I have been thinking about since the Annual Meeting. Those of you who attended this year's meeting may remember that temperatures outside and in the building had been very high that week but had dropped sufficiently on the day of the meeting, so we could enjoy dinner in the Social Hall before getting down to business. Still, it was warm. I was nervous about that meeting. I pictured sharing the list of our accomplishments and improvements this year, and being met with disapproval, maybe even resentment ... "Sure, that's what you've gotten done but what have you got to say about this HEAT?" "We're schvitzing here; what are you going to do about it?" "What have you got to say for yourself?" It sounds like a bad dream, right?

But I was reminded that night that you appreciate our leadership and our committee and team volunteers; that you understand we are working with HVAC resources to get the parts necessary to cool us down while keeping us warm and fuzzy; that you are UNDERSTANDING about the situation and FLEXIBLE with regard to temporarily moving services from the Sanctuary to one of the classrooms where the HVAC is working. You are with us, and I am grateful. And we are with you. Whether you need meals prepared by the Caring Community, or a ride to services or a doctor appointment, or the company of those who care about you – we're here. We're not only here; we will welcome your visit, your participation, even your help with projects. It's a win-win relationship. Thank you for that, and I hope to see you very soon.

L'shalom,

Melissa Putterman Hoffmann
President

The Privilege of Choice

THE PRIVILEGE OF CHOICE is something that I have come to appreciate more than maybe anything else in life. It is something I find is taken as routine and often taken for granted. At times, it can seem like we even have too many choices and options, from picking out new clothes, to the seemingly infinite displays of produce, packaged food and coolers at the grocery store.

But what if you find yourself suddenly without the option to choose? What happens when you're unexpectedly laid off and one paycheck away from empty kitchen cupboards and a fridge full just of condiments? What if the clothes you're relegated to become the only two or three articles you own, and you can't replace them?

It's a closer reality for most of us than we care to admit.

However, the privilege of choice is something that we can give to others through good deeds, like supplying the Free Food Fridges, and shopping for Street Soldiers. By doing our monthly shops, we provide the ability to choose directly to countless families, including many children. Every time I have brought the bags of supplies to Street Soldiers, and every time I have filled the Free Food Fridges, immediately I am able to see the tangible impact that this action creates.

From the excited looks to the endless "thank you's" from folks on the receiving end, to hearing people in line tell their kids that they'll "be good for the rest of the month," I know with my whole heart that we as a synagogue are making a positive change throughout our community. And it makes an even more lasting impression that we are right there in the streets with the folks we aid. People know that we genuinely care, and consistently so. I know they know, because I was on their side of the line for a long time, and it made a difference to me.

Thank you for contributing to our initiatives to bridge the gap of food insecurity amongst our neighbors in the City of Albany.

-- Hayden Schwartz

You can help by making a donation to B'nai Sholom designated to the Fresh Food for Families program. Join us on a shopping trip and we'll show you how to become a Fresh Food grocer. Thanks a million to those who contribute and let's keep sharing access to healthy food with our neighbors!!

Rosh Hashanah Luncheon Invites Coming This Month

All congregants will be receiving their invitations to our annual Rosh Hashanah luncheons in mid-August. Please respond to your host by September 3 to allow time for them to coordinate the menu.

For Kids and Families...

Rosh Hashanah

For kids, Rosh Hashanah activities can be fun and engaging, focusing on the holiday's themes of sweetness, reflection and new beginnings. Activities like apple printing, honey tasting and making cards can be particularly enjoyable.

PJLibrary.org has many ideas for activities for different age groups, as well as wonderful holiday-themed books. One idea is to make your own cards, using an apple cut in half and some paint. Apple printing is easy and fun for all ages.



PJLibrary.com

Jewish.MomsAndCrafters.com also has some creative craft ideas, including free, downloadable holiday cards.



JewishColoringPages.com

Calling All Creatives!

Do you paint, weave, sculpt, work with clay, make jewelry, crochet, knit, needlepoint, cross stitch, take photographs or engage in other artistic pursuits?

In an effort to enhance our display area, we're planning to offer changing exhibits of the artistry or collections of our congregants.

We're inviting congregants to provide one or two close-up pictures of items they have created or collected and would like to lend to the temple for our locked display cases. These items do not necessarily need to be related to Judaism. We would like something eye-catching and of interest to a variety of people of all ages.

The loan period will be several months, and we'd like a variety of motifs and materials that will fit our display cases. The dimensions for display are:

- Maximum height is 41"
- Maximum width is 28"
- Maximum depth is 10"

This will be an ongoing project that will rotate items periodically and identify the contributor. If you feel you have something you'd like to contribute to this effort, please submit your photos as soon as possible. [Details for submissions are listed in the weekly announcements.](#)

So don't be shy with your creations! We know there are many talented people among us. Questions? Contact the Display Team: Lois Gordon, Martha Rozett, Alex Wiegand or Gwen Spicer.

Welcome New Members!

The congregation welcomes the following new members, who have joined us since last Fall:

Gwen Spicer
Jeremy and Melissa "Mimi" Lyon, Ronan and Annabelle
Jude Sagor
Marsha Lazarus and Kathleen O'Connor
Estee Jacob

We're so pleased to have you as part of our community!

Too Many Cucumbers? A Plethora of Tomatoes?

"Grow a Row" August Drop-Off Dates

If your garden has an abundance of vegetables, donating your extra produce to a local food pantry may be just the solution! You would also be doing a great mitzvah because the federal government recently eliminated the USDA program that purchased produce from local farmers for food banks. As a result, food pantries will be unable to offer fresh produce as before to their users. Without donations from the community, this summer's bounty of fresh vegetables will not be available to all.

B'nai Sholom gardeners can help by bringing a share of their harvest to the synagogue for transport to a local food pantry. You can bring your donations on:

- **Tuesday, August 5 or Wednesday, August 6**
- *Dates for other summer pickups will be published in the weekly E-blast.*

Thank you for considering participating in our new "Till A Tithe" program for our community.

-- Alyssa Talanker

"At the end of three years, you shall take out all the tithe of your crop ...and place it in your cities...the stranger...will come and eat and be satisfied; so that the Eternal will bless you in all the work of your hand that you will do."

Deuteronomy 14: 28-29

Being Proactive with Our Own Safety

In the process of preparing for the High Holy Days, a member of the Safety and Security Committee recently attended an online training session given by the Secure Community Network (SCN), one of the Jewish Homeland Security agencies that provide safety advice. The 38-minute webinar was called Key Considerations for High Holiday Preparation. **At the 20-minute mark**, it provided advice regarding community security and how to ensure our own safety at events and indicated that we should not abdicate this responsibility.

Tips provided included: making sure that our phones are charged sufficiently for the duration of the event, staying on the event perimeter to provide for easy exiting, and - for events attended with family - formulating an emergency plan before the event. Since these practical tips apply to many situations, we want to call this to everyone's attention. To get all the sound advice that SCN provided, you can view the video here: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=olAszE5UiT4>

Adult Education – Fall 2025

SAVE THE DATE!

Live From Jerusalem: A Schmooze with Rabbi Emeritus Don Cashman

Sunday, November 2 @ 10 AM

BOOK SALE

Loaves of Torah: Exploring the Jewish Year through Challah

We have a few copies left of *Loaves of Torah* following our fascinating hands-on challah-shaping workshop with Rabbi Vanessa Harper. In her book, Rabbi Harper shapes an interpretative challah for each weekly Torah portion and Jewish holiday. A creative journey through the Jewish year, the book includes blessings, recipes and tips for creating your own revelatory challot. A wonderful gift idea for your favorite baker! The book is \$25; contact the office to reserve your copy.

NEW COURSE

Shalom Retirement: Creating Balance, Cultivating Wholeness (Via Zoom)

Tuesdays, September 16 & 30, October 21 and 28, 3:00-4:30 PM

\$90 (\$80 B'nai Sholom member)

*"...In retirement, when we become **unmoored from our normal structures** and we don't have to live according to rigorous schedules, mindful living can help reacquaint us with the joys that went unrecognized for so many decades."* -- **Rabbi Zalman Schachter-Shalomi, From Age-ing to Sage-ing**

Join with others to pause and contemplate how your transition process is reflected in the multiple meanings of the Hebrew word *shalom*: hello, goodbye, peace and wholeness. This highly participatory, four-session program will help you to:

- explore your internal images of "retirement";
- understand the process of transition as a series of endings, unknowns and beginnings;
- draw from the practices of "spiritual eldering" including gratitude and forgiveness;
- consider ongoing shifts in identity and life balance;
- identify the steps you can take to cultivate your next phase of life – and legacy – with purpose and meaning.

The class will be led by Audrey Seidman, a Sage-ing Mentor®. Since 2016, Audrey has offered workshops, keynote addresses and panel presentations on conscious aging and cultivating a meaningful retirement for many local organizations, including B'nai Sholom. Please register online at www.bnaisholomalbany.org.

Thank You!

... to the fantastic Bulletin Brigade who helped fold and stuff June's Bulletin: Rema Goldstein, Martha Rozett, Jim and Joan Savitt, Mark and Cheryl Reeder, Mari Vosburgh, Ken Tannen, Lew Sperber.

... to the following congregants who recently hosted an oneg Shabbat or kiddush lunch: Gail Golderman and Rochelle Goldfarb; the Goldberg Family; Susan Radosh and Steve Klein.

Mazal Tov!!

...to Jamie Kammer on the birth of her son, Eric, born July 5!

...to Julie Novkov and Joel Bloom on the wedding of Asher Moses Novkov-Bloom and Stephanie Poetri Dougharty, May 30 in Beverly Hills, California!

...to our latest graduates and their families: Sarah Davis, MPA from UAlbany, and Ethan Goldberg, heading to Penn State Univ. to study mechanical engineering!

The Congregation Notes with Thanks These Contributions:

General Fund

In memory of **Raymond Novkov Jr.** by Julie Novkov and Joel Bloom

On the Yahrzeit of **Gerald Fruiterman** by Roy and Judy Fruiterman

In memory of **Selma Jarett, Harold Roth and Dror Koren** by Amy and Yossi Koren-Roth

In memory of **Sylvia Prizant** by Ben and Becky Marvin

In appreciation of **Dayle Zatlin and Joel Blumenthal** by Ben and Becky Marvin

Social Action Fund

In memory of **Julius Golderman** by Gail Golderman and Rochelle Goldfarb

Tot Shabbat

Lyndsi Holmes

Books for Babies

In honor of **Genevive Claire Oullette DiPaola, daughter of Katelyn Ouellette DiPaola and David DiPaola** by Ben and Becky Marvin

Please note, some donations will be recorded a month after they are received due to technical issues.

Donate Online Easily with the DONATE Button

There's an easy, convenient and secure way to donate to B'nai Sholom: the DONATE button on the website. It's a safe alternative to sending checks through the mail, and you can use this feature 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 at <https://www.bnaisholomalbany.org>.

The following Yahrtzeits will be observed in August:

8/1

S. Gerald Duckor; Dror Koren; Adele Pastor; Bernice Smith; Fred Aron; Benjamin Binewitch*; Anita Domfort; Raymond Novkov, Jr; Helen Pollack Adler; Barbara Wachs; Barney Ginsburg*; Edith Eidelman; Rudolph Stern*

8/8

Samuel C. Warshaw*; Alex M. Rabineau*; Rose Gottesman Pollack; Thomas Duerr; Rex Vail; Peter Pflanz; Jacob Stein; Alice Tausig Rozett; Diane Burkowsky; Milton Swartz; Lorraine Tharus

8/15

Rose Putterman*; Phyllis Gilsenberg; Isidore Dinkin; Eva Gordon; Annie Frances Via Grayson*; Esther Binewitch*; Walter L. Grayson, Sr.*; Samuel Walker*

8/22

Ed Pacuk; Gerald Hazard; Lore Hauptman; Gina Kleinfeld; Miriam Falb; Robert Stoller; Frieda Hoffmann*

8/29

Cecily Redler Jacobs; Elaine S. Cashman; Paul Edward Krochmal; Arthur Jacob Sharp; Angelina DiPaola*; Ann Radosh; Oscar Rozett; Albert Einstein*

9/5

Sydell Morris; Franklyn Cole*; Nathan Green; Marvin J. Finkelstein*; Arthur T. Singer*

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: Melissa Putterman Hoffmann can be reached at president@bnaisholomalbany.org

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

September
October

Deadline

August 13
September 10