

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

420 WHITEHALL RD., ALBANY, NY 12208
E-mail: office@bnaisholomalbany.org
September 2025

Phone: 518-482-5283
Visit us at <https://www.bnaisholomalbany.org>
Elul 5785/Tishrei 5786

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation is a Brit Olam Congregation in covenant with the world because we seek the world we want for all, not the world as it is. We embrace our sacred responsibility to care for the Earth and its inhabitants, a Jewish tradition of stewardship and partnership in the ongoing work of Creation dating back to Genesis.

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, September 5	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, September 6	EXTENDED STUDY OF THE PROPHETS (HYBRID)	10:00 AM
Friday, September 12	TOT SHABBAT	5:30 PM
	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, September 13	TORAH STUDY (ZOOM)	10:00 AM
	S'LICHOT SERVICE	8:00 PM
Friday, September 19	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, September 20	TORAH STUDY (ZOOM)	10:00 AM
Monday, September 22	EREV ROSH HASHANAH SERVICE	7:00 PM
Tuesday, September 23	ROSH HASHANAH SERVICE	10:00 AM
Friday, September 26	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, September 27	TORAH STUDY (ZOOM)	10:00 AM
Wednesday, October 1	KOL NIDRE SERVICE	7:00 PM
Thursday, October 2	YOM KIPPUR MORNING SERVICE	10:00 AM
	SEE ANNOUNCEMENTS FOR ADDITIONAL SERVICES & STUDY TIMES	
Friday, October 3	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, October 4	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...

This year on the secular calendar, the High Holy Days are split, with Rosh Hashanah in September and Yom Kippur in October. But on the Jewish calendar, all is the same as usual: the holidays themselves start in Tishrei and the new Jewish year, 5786, will begin on the first day of the seventh month. (See Leviticus 23:24 or Numbers 29:1 if you don't believe me!)

Why is Rosh Hashanah in the seventh month and not the first? That's a question for G-d or Moses, but I'll take a stab at it. There are four new years on the Jewish calendar. The month that *actually* starts the year – i.e. the first month – is Nisan. Nisan falls in the springtime and is the month when Passover falls. It feels fitting to start a new year in the spring, as plants begin to bloom, many animals have their young, and it feels like things are starting fresh.

So perhaps that's part of the reason that Rosh Hashanah is in the fall. [Yes, you may rightly point out that Jews in the Southern Hemisphere are, indeed celebrating it in the spring, but since the holidays are based on the seasons in the Land of Israel, I'm working from that perspective.] We might be tempted to think that the year is over, that hope and new life and opportunities for growth are fading, but our tradition reminds us that it's not true. There will *always* be new opportunities to start fresh, to redirect our steps back to the correct path – or as close to it as we can get – and to sow new seeds for the year ahead.

The Jewish month leading up to these holidays is Elul. It's a season of reflection when we work on *cheshbon hanefesh* – taking an accounting of our souls. We think back on the "debts" we need to make up for, whether literal monetary debts or mistakes we need to rectify. Like the autumn month of Tishrei, Elul can be associated with a sobering vibe, but it, too, includes a reminder of joy. The name ELUL is often seen as an acronym for Ani L'dodi v'Dodi Li (trust me – the letters work in Hebrew) – "I am my beloved's and my beloved is mine." (Song of Songs 6:3). The acronym takes our mind out of the mode of exclusively dwelling on our errors, reminds us that G-d is more eager to dispense love than judgment, and encourages us to look at the other side of the "balance sheet" as well, giving ourselves credit for what we've done right.

I look forward to seeing you at the many services, study sessions, and communal gatherings that launch us collectively into this season of renewal!

L'shalom,

Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot

9/13 (8:00 PM) – Leil S'lichot

9/22 (7:00 PM) – Rosh Hashanah Evening Service

9/23 (10:00 AM) – Rosh Hashanah Morning Service

- (4:30 PM) – Tashlich @ Buckingham Pond; PJ Library Tashlich at 3:30 PM

10/1 (7:00 PM) – Kol Nidrei

10/2 (10:00 AM) – Yom Kippur Morning

10/2 (1:30 PM) – Yom Kippur Study Session

10/2 (3:30 PM) – Healing Service

10/2 (4:15 PM) – Yom Kippur Afternoon

10/2 (5:30 PM) – Yom Kippur Yizkor

10/2 (6:15 PM) – Yom Kippur Ne'ilah

10/13 (7:00 PM) - Simchat Torah (including Yizkor)

From Our President...

How do we prepare to celebrate a new year? Easy: 1) send out cards, 2) order honey, 3) spend time in contemplation in the Sanctuary, followed by a wonderful Rosh Hashanah luncheon with old and new friends, and after a nap 4) enjoy brisket and honey cake (or stuffed squash with autumnal filling) with family and friends. But how about 10 days later, when we are commanded to take inventory of our failings to the world, to those we know and to ourselves? How do we get ready for that level of scrutiny and apology?

Cosmetics companies count on us wanting to find our blemishes, even the tiniest imperfections. The highest magnification in a standard magnifying mirror is typically 30x. In nature, that means we could see the hairs on spider legs. Elsewhere in nature, we could see tiny grains of sand as if they were tiny pebbles. How about what we could observe in our behavior and thoughts? What do the imperfections in our acting, feeling and thinking look like? Are they gross missteps or simply what happens in the absence of what we should do?

Very luckily, we have some time to remember the hurts we have created, the angry thoughts we return to, and the situations that called for righteous and brave behavior ... that we did not offer. And – and this is important – we have time to apologize where we can and to make a B'rit (covenant) with ourselves to do better.

As we often say, you are not alone. Others will be using that 30X mirror and feeling unhappy about what they see. The B'nai Sholom community engages in joyful celebration but also prays together for the strength to do what is hard and the ability to understand as much as we can about the most troublesome human behavior.

Come celebrate and pray when you can. But whether we see you or not, you are not alone. Your B'nai Sholom family is with you.

L'shalom,

Melissa Putterman Hoffmann

Keeping Each Other Safe

Dear Congregants and Visitors,

It is wonderful to be in the company of those we enjoy and to engage in pursuits that bring us happiness. Whether worshipping or enjoying refreshments or doing committee work at B'nai Sholom, we are in an environment that makes us feel valued and that seeks to keep us safe. Key fobs are an example. We have moved from keys to using fobs to gain entrance. If you are a member, you may request a fob through the main office. The fob will get you into the building during regular office hours, service hours and other events. If you are a committee or team member, you can request a fob that will allow you to enter the building at any time using a special access code.

Greeters are another intervention to keep us safe. Those friendly people who open the door or who welcome you when you enter with your fob are certainly happy to see you, but they also have a job to do. They are ensuring that everyone who enters is a member, or the guest of a member, or a visitor who has been vetted either by identifying who in the congregation knows them, or by discerning that their reason for entering is a positive and safe one. Greeters are trained and do their best to make sure that everyone gets in on time. We know it can be frustrating when you arrive and cannot get in right away, and we are grateful for your patience. Greeting goes more efficiently when people arrive on time for a service or event.

As you arrive at B'nai Sholom, we ask that you take a moment to realize how valuable you are and how much we want you to be safe. As you enter the building, look around to see if someone you don't know is also about to enter. Of course, that person may be a new member you haven't met yet or a guest that has come several times. Rather than worry about offending anyone, consider waiting for the Greeter to admit you (even if you have a fob) and make sure the Greeter knows there is a new face in the building.

The commandment to keep each other safe is connected to the principle of Pikuach Nefesh: saving a life. One of the parts of this commandment has to do with preventing foreseeable harm. Another component has to do with taking mutual responsibility to keep others safe. We are honored to do the work of Pikuach Nefesh with you. Safety is the task for all of us.

-- Melissa Putterman Hoffmann

Here for You: The Caring Community

The Caring Community is here to support you through life's ups or downs — in times of joy as well as times of illness or sorrow. We have had a great response from volunteers eager to cook, drive you to appointments, run errands, participate in a shiva minyan or just visit. So please call on us if there is anything you need for any reason and give our volunteers the opportunity to perform a mitzvah!

Please Join Us for a
Know Your Rights & Protecting Our Immigrant Neighbors
Discussion
Wednesday, September 10, 6:00 - 7:15 PM at the synagogue

Kelley Gourley, the Director of Operations at RISSE (Refugee and Immigrant Support Services of Emmaus, Inc.), will speak about your rights when it comes to interacting with and observing immigration agents as well as teach us about how to share this knowledge with others, particularly newcomer communities. Kelley will also cover local rapid response efforts and how to get involved to support those who have been affected by detainment and deportation.

With over 10 years of experience in the sphere of refugee services, Kelley is a trained *Know Your Rights* educator and hopes to further the community's knowledge of them during these alarming times. She also acts on a volunteer basis as the Community Watch Lead for the Capital Region Sanctuary Coalition. She previously served as the Refugee Services Manager at the U.S. Committee for Refugees and Immigrants. She holds an MA in anthropology in addition to a BA in international relations and a BA in Middle East and North Africa studies, all from Boston University.

While registration for B'nai Sholom congregants is not required, it is greatly appreciated. Register here: <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/zkb6wzsm6f>
If you can only attend by ZOOM, please let the office know.

An Easy-Peasy Mitzvah Opportunity!

Wanted: A volunteer, just once every 4 to 6 weeks.

What for: Pick up the food and personal care items at the synagogue and take them to the Regional Food Pantry

Difficulty level: Easy-peasy!

Contact: Becky Marvin beckymarvin4574@gmail.com

Be Sure to RSVP for Your Rosh Hashanah Potluck Luncheon!

All congregants and their families are invited to attend a Rosh Hashanah potluck luncheon after services on Tuesday, September 23. If you haven't already responded to your invitation, please confirm your plans -- yes or no -- with your hosts right away. If you haven't received an invitation, contact Joan Savitt at jnsavitt@yahoo.com.

Plenty Of Produce in Your Garden?

Last Drop-Off Dates for Grow a Row

Donating your extra produce to a local food pantry is 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, September 9 or Wednesday, September 10

Thank you for considering participation 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

Let's Play 20 Questions!

Well, really, it's only 2 questions...

Do you have a gift card you're not going to use? Don't let it go to waste! You can donate it to Family Promise for the gift card pull at our fall fundraiser, *Doors to the Future*, on October 23.

Do you have any craft supplies you won't be using? Specifically looking for wired ribbon and a few other items to make centerpieces for *Doors to the Future* to celebrate our 10-year anniversary!

If you have any of these to donate, please contact Becky Marvin beckymarvin4574@gmail.com.

The Kids Were Super Excited

It took hours. Usually, I can spend money quickly but when we are striving to get the most for our precious funds, we compare and contrast and then weigh, notate the cost and add it to the total. We have \$325 to spend and three refrigerators to fill.

Our most recent shop-and-fill brought us to one refrigerator that had faulty refrigeration. What to do? It was a blistering hot day and food is precious. A gentleman walked by and we filled his bag with fresh fruits and vegetables, dairy and healthy snacks. He could not stop thanking us. Did we feel a bit embarrassed?

We have well-stocked refrigerators and pantries; he shared that he had no food in the house and a child to feed. We helped.

An adult and her charges happened by as they were on their way to the Lincoln Park Pool. Cheryl recalls that the kids were, "Super excited about the healthy snacks available." Cherries were a favorite, a fresh lemon was a curiosity to one of the girls. I defaulted into teacher mode.

Shopping, sorting, bagging, delivering took over five hours. Life is short, time is precious; some tasks are worth the effort.

We thank all who continue to make it possible for us to provide invaluable fresh food and healthy snacks to our neighbors in Albany. Jamella Anderson, who runs the Free Food Fridge program in Albany, is always so grateful when I send my text telling her when we are available to shop-and-fill and request which fridges we should tackle. When I encounter her at Honest Weight Food Co-op, where she is on the Board of Directors, I get a huge hug and thank you. She should be thanking you, our congregants, who donate Hannaford cards and funds to this endeavor.

Do you have someone to honor who does not want a gift? Please purchase Hannaford cards from Ellie Davis (Fundraising) or make a donation to Fresh Food for Families. What better way to honor them than to donate some money in their name. It's food without the calories!

-- Valerie Tabak

Summer Family BBQ – The Coolest Place to Be!

It was a hot summer day in August for our fourth annual Family Barbecue/Picnic. But once again it was a huge success!

Nearly 60 adult congregants and friends along with six children of B'nai Sholom gathered at Elm Avenue Park in Bethlehem for an afternoon of food and fun. People schmoozed with friends both old and new and enjoyed some entertaining music. In addition to the grilled foods and cold drinks, attendees feasted on an assortment of potluck sides, snacks and desserts. We even had an "Ice Cream Social" with all the toppings.

The children delighted in getting their faces painted. They went on to paint their own rocks.

The effort that went into the planning and execution of the event was led by the Membership Team: Howie Domfort, Libby Liebschutz, Barbara Devore, Katelyn Ouellette DiPaola, Alex Wiegand and Dee Wind.

A good time was had by all. Based on this year's success, we are looking forward to a bigger and better one in 2026!

The Membership Team would like to thank those who attended and helped with: setup • grilling • registration • fundraising • clean-up • and security. Plus, music by Aaron Davis and Matt (on drums), face painting by Sarah Davis and logistical support by Office Manager Emily Pickering!

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>.

Adult Education – Fall 2025

SAVE THE DATE!

Live From Jerusalem: A Schmooze with Rabbi Emeritus Don Cashman

Sunday, November 2 @ 10 AM

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.

For Kids and Families...

Yom Kippur

Ten days after Rosh Hashanah comes Yom Kippur, a day on which adults who are able do not eat in order to focus on apologizing for past mistakes and preparing for the year ahead. For kids, Yom Kippur can be a time to explore the value of apologies and forgiveness. While children may be too young to fast, kids of all ages understand the weight of saying "I'm sorry."

PJLibrary.org recommends these books: *Sammy Spider's First Yom Kippur* for children under 5, and *The Hardest Word* for older kids.

PJLibrary.org also has a wonderful article about ways that young children can take part on Yom Kippur:

- **Give something up.** Encourage children to give something up for the day while the adults are fasting.
- **Say sorry.** Families can talk about moments they wish they'd handled differently. Read a story about forgiveness.
- **Make resolutions.** One way to look forward to the coming year is to make resolutions. Kids may resolve to reach out to the child who is picked last for kickball or to sit with someone at lunch.
- **Do some good.** Volunteer as a family or make a family donation to a favorite charity.

JewishColoringPages.com also has some creative craft ideas, including free, downloadable pictures.



JewishColoringPages.com



JewishColoringPages.com

Thank You!

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

... to the following congregants who recently hosted an oneg Shabbat or kiddush lunch: Melissa Putterman Hoffmann and Gary Hoffmann; Martha Rozett; Melissa Putterman Hoffmann and Gary Hoffmann; Ann Lowenfels and Steve Redler.

The Congregation Notes with Thanks These Contributions:

General Fund

In honor of **David and Libby Liebschutz's 40th anniversary** by Barney Horowitz

In memory of **Cecily Redler Jacobs** by Ann Lowenfels and Steve Redler

Free Food Fridge

Anita Stein; Lois Gordon; Laurie Shanks

Yizkor Books

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

Books for Babies

In honor of **Jaimie Kammer on the birth of her son, Eric**, by Ben and Becky Marvin

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

The following Yahrtzeits will be observed in September:

9/5

Franklyn Cole*; Nathan Green; Marvin J. Finkelstein*; Arthur T. Singer*; Louis Greenstein*; Belle Schwartz; Minna Katzin*; Harold Quell

9/12

Leah Royne; Edith Cabelly; Elsie Logwood; Edward Hoffman; Morris Parets*; Abraham Sperber; Ethel Link; David Engler*; Vivian Quell; Sydell Morris; Marvin Morris

9/19

Marylin Ruben; Joseph (Norm) Ouellette; Lubi Radosh; Ari Propp; Rifka Propp; Charlotte Sacks; Shari Knieling; Edward Lindquist; Betty Herbert; Alice Winston*; Mollie Belkin Lazoroff*; Henry Nussbaum; Rose Levine Goldstein*; Martin Klein

9/26

Martin Kleinfeld*; Yetta Berman*; Irving Cherry; Arthur Nitka; Jakob Simon Krochmal; Saul Toback; David Binewitch*; Samuel Pock*; Jeannie Bick; Rosemary Daly; Donald Goldberg

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.

<u>Period Covered</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
October	September 10
November	October 8