

B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation

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

Phone: 518-482-5283
Visit us at <https://www.bnaisholomalbany.org>
Cheshvan/Kislev 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.

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, October 31	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, November 1	EXTENDED STUDY OF THE PROPHETS (HYBRID)	10:00 AM
Friday, November 7	NEW MEMBER KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:30 PM
Saturday, November 8	TORAH STUDY (ZOOM)	10:00 AM
Friday, November 14	TOT SHABBAT	5:30 PM
	KABBALAT SHABBAT WITH TORAH SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, November 15	TORAH STUDY (ZOOM)	10:00 AM
Friday, November 21	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, November 22	TORAH STUDY (ZOOM)	10:00 AM
Friday, November 28	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, November 29	TORAH STUDY (ZOOM)	10:00 AM
Friday, December 5	KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE	7:00 PM
Saturday, December 6	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...

In 2021, the year I started at B'nai Sholom, the High Holy Days fell almost as early on the secular calendar as possible. It gave me an extra push to hit the ground running – setting up my office, getting to know the congregation, and preparing for the busiest holiday season of the year all at once. So, when the apples and honey were eaten, the Yom Kippur fast was broken, the sukkah had been taken down and the Torah was rolled back to the beginning, I was excited for the month ahead: Cheshvan, or more accurately Marcheshvan.

While the wordplay that separates the name of the month into two words – Mar + Cheshvan – might have originated from a mistranslation, the traditional interpretation stuck. The month is frequently lamented as Bitter (Mar) Cheshvan. Why bitter? One tradition teaches that the Flood in parashat Noach began on the 17th of this month. But mostly it's considered bitter because it is the only month on the Jewish calendar with no holidays – other than Shabbat, that is.

I was expecting a different scenario though, in the sweetness of a rest after the hubbub of holiday prep. After all, I figured, they must make those "Rabbis Love Cheshvan" t-shirts for a reason! But a mentor shared with me the reality that things don't come to a screeching halt. There's still lots to catch up on that had been sidelined during the holiday rush plus the regular rhythm of synagogue life. It's a gradual slowing down back to "normal life".

This month of Marcheshvan is precious – not because it slams the brakes, but because it lets us find our rhythm to keep going at a (hopefully) sustained pace. The fall holidays are over, but many of us are already planning for the quieter but still joyous celebration of Chanukah and enjoying coming together for Aufrufs (pre-wedding blessings) and weddings; cooking potluck dishes for New Member Shabbat (coming November 7!); sorting through our closets for the clothing drive, (now November 16!); reading some Shakespeare in preparation for our next synagogue scholar talk, and more.

So, enjoy your Marcheshvan and let's all keep going!

L'shalom,

Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot

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!

From Our President...

~~We Did It~~ You Did It

When I think of where we were and what we were doing two weeks ago, it's hard to believe that we made it through challenges that seemed almost insurmountable. The High Holy Days were moving in more ways than one! Our packing list included 180 prayer books for each holiday, an Ark, 2 Torahs, a lectern, a candle-lighting table and candle supplies, tech equipment, microphones and sound equipment, music stands, an almost a full supply of kitchen items including what my mother-in-law of blessed memory would have called "what to eat on," and of course the food that we enjoyed during the Oneg on Rosh Hashanah and the Break-Fast on Yom Kippur. We made it to the JCC and back. It was a Herculean effort. But as we spoke about on Rosh Hashanah, "what meaningful experience isn't?" I learned not to worry: if we let you know where we are, you will come.

And now we started the New Year in anticipation of a very large, very heavy delivery. So big and heavy that trucks wouldn't drive onto our lawn with our new HVAC units in tow, the units had to be transported over the building by crane. While we are excited, we know that moving forward we must make an extra effort to be kind to the planet, especially because, given the type of HVAC units we have ordered, we'll be burning fossil fuels for at least the next 20 years. So now, with the physical and emotional clutter swept from our work surface, what are we to make of ourselves, how are we to continue improving as individuals and perhaps even as a congregation?

The Board of Trustees has actually begun to ask itself that very question. In November, we will continue an exploration we began in September of what we most want to do as a board. As was highlighted on Rosh Hashanah, this board is an impassioned group (as all B'nai Shalom boards have been). So I anticipate that discussions moving forward will be lively with perhaps a wide range of opinions expressed. Remind me to drink an extra cup of coffee. We'll keep you posted as we move along.

L'shalom,

Melissa Putterman Hoffmann

Check Out our New Display Cases!

We've kicked off our display cases highlighting congregant creations. Take a moment to view the lovely photographs taken by Ben Marvin. They'll be on display until mid-December.

If you have an artistic talent you'd like to share with us, contact the Display Committee: Martha Rozett, Gwen Spicer or Lois Gordon.



B'nai Sholom
Welcomes All Congregants
To
New Member Shabbat
Friday, November 7, 2025

Special Service Honoring New Members
at 7:30 p.m.

Potluck/Partly Catered Dinner
at 6:00 p.m.



RSVP for the dinner by Oct. 30 using the link in the weekly email

Beit Kafeh / Coffeehouse

Open Mic and Concert

Featuring

Protest Songs of the 1960s

Saturday, November 15, 7:00 PM in the Social Hall



Start polishing your act and get ready to join us for a night of singing, storytelling, poetry and music. Or surprise us with your standup act! Then step into the time warp to revisit the 1960s with the B'nai Sholom Irregulars.

First part of the evening will be open mic. Everyone is invited to perform: sing a song, play an instrument, tell a story, read some poems or tell a joke or two. Listen and appreciate, or perform and be appreciated. A keyboard (piano, not computer) will be available for anyone who needs it.

After intermission, the B'nai Sholom Irregulars (Phil Teumim, Will Vail and friends) will perform selected protest songs of the 1960s.

The event is open to all congregants and their invited guests. Guests must register in advance at <https://forms.cloud.microsoft/r/kvegrASxmQ>.

Want to sign up to perform in advance? Or have questions? Email event host Phil Teumim at philteumim@gmail.com.

Adult Education – Fall 2025

Live From Jerusalem: A Schmooze with our Rabbi Emeritus, Don Cashman

Sunday, November 2 at 10 AM

It's been almost three years since Rabbi Don Cashman made Jerusalem his retirement home along with his wife Sharona Wachs. They made Aliyah under the Law of Return, emerging from Ben Gurion Airport as Israeli citizens with ID cards, health insurance and even some cash. While staying in their pre-arranged Airbnb, they found an apartment on the 14th floor of one of Jerusalem's tallest buildings to rent for a 2½-year term. Recently they bought an apartment, calling it their "forever home."

Eleven months after arriving, they woke up to find that Simchat Torah services had been cancelled due to an emerging "security situation." That day, October 7, 2023, would turn out to be one of the most significant days in Israeli and modern Jewish history.

What's it like to live as pensioners in Israel? What's it like to live when the sirens send you to shelter from the missiles sent by Hamas or Hezbollah or the Houthis or Iran? What's the reality on the ground for daily life?

Rabbi Cashman will talk about these questions and more on November 2. Look for the weekly e-mail announcements for the Zoom link.

Movie Night

"The Mamboniks"

Saturday, November 8 at 7:30 PM

Bagels meet bongos in this joyous documentary telling the surprising story of Jewish dancers who fell in love with the Cuban mambo in the 1950s, sparking a dance craze that swept the nation. This group of free-spirited dancers earned a nickname: the *mamboniks*. It's a lovely story of building bridges between cultures and communities enhanced by great archival footage, and the film is guaranteed to get your hips swaying. By the director of "The Catskills." There will be a \$5 admission fee, and non-members are requested to pre-register via the website link.

Film Discussion

"Bombshell: The Hedy Lamarr Story"

Thursday, November 20 at 7:30 PM (via Zoom)

The next Chaiflicks film for discussion is "Bombshell: The Hedy Lamarr Story," a documentary about the 1940s Hollywood movie star. She was known for her matchless beauty and electric screen persona, but Lamarr's legion of fans never knew she possessed such a powerful mind or a Jewish background. Acting by day, inventing by night, she came up with a "secret communication system" to help the Allies beat the Nazis. A *New York Times* Critic's Pick.

This film is available with multiple copies in the library system as well as on various streaming platforms. All are welcome to the discussion; contact Barney Horowitz, horowitz28@verizon.net, for the link.

Synagogue Scholar Talk by Mary Warrenner

Torah and Shakespeare in Conversation: *Genesis*, *Richard III* and *Hamlet*

Sunday, December 7 at 10:30 AM

Preceded by bagels and coffee/tea at 10:00

According to Rabbi Jonathan Sacks in his famous book *The Dignity of Difference*, conversation is the "greatest single antidote to violence," but when fear makes direct conversation difficult, we can look to literature, sacred and secular, to help us find wisdom – the truth that can't be faked. In conversation, Torah and Shakespeare can tell us that this moment, fraught with so much conflict, may be new to us, but it is also old. Civil strife starts with sibling rivalry. It can undermine families and nations because it's driven by overwhelming emotions that smother reason, reflection and perspective. And it's no wonder – siblings represent our first encounter with the other and thereby our first glimpse of the self. All our stories tell us that when we destroy them, we destroy ourselves. By listening to Torah and Shakespeare in conversation, particularly the stories of Cain and Joseph in *Genesis* and Shakespeare's *Richard III* and *Hamlet*, we will try to access some much-needed perspective, to fear less, to think better, to believe in the future, in the world we can make together.

Mary is a professor at SUNY Orange Community College, where she taught the college's Shakespeare course for 23 years, as well as other literature, writing and philosophy courses. Over the years, Mary has given a number of presentations and led discussions on Shakespeare plays, including at B'nai Sholom.

All are welcome and non-members are requested to pre-register via website link.

ALERT: CHANGE OF DATE FOR THE CLOTHING DRIVE

You may drop off your donations at the synagogue:

TUESDAY, November 11 through FRIDAY, November 14 *WHEN THE BUILDING IS OPEN***

Or on

SUNDAY, November 16, 11 AM to 1 PM.

AND WE WILL ALSO COLLECT:

- Non-perishable food for the Regional Food Bank ***as the need for food for our neighbors has increased.***
- Gently used children's books for distribution to programs supporting literacy.

FOR CLOTHING DONATIONS:

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.**

*****Please place your donations neatly in the marked classroom. Don't leave them outside of building. Thank you!***

For Kids and Families...

Chanukah

PJLibrary.org has many ideas for activities for different age groups, including preparing Chanukah recipes from around the world. One recipe is for bimuelos, dough fritters dipped in syrup and enjoyed by many Sephardic families.

Ingredients

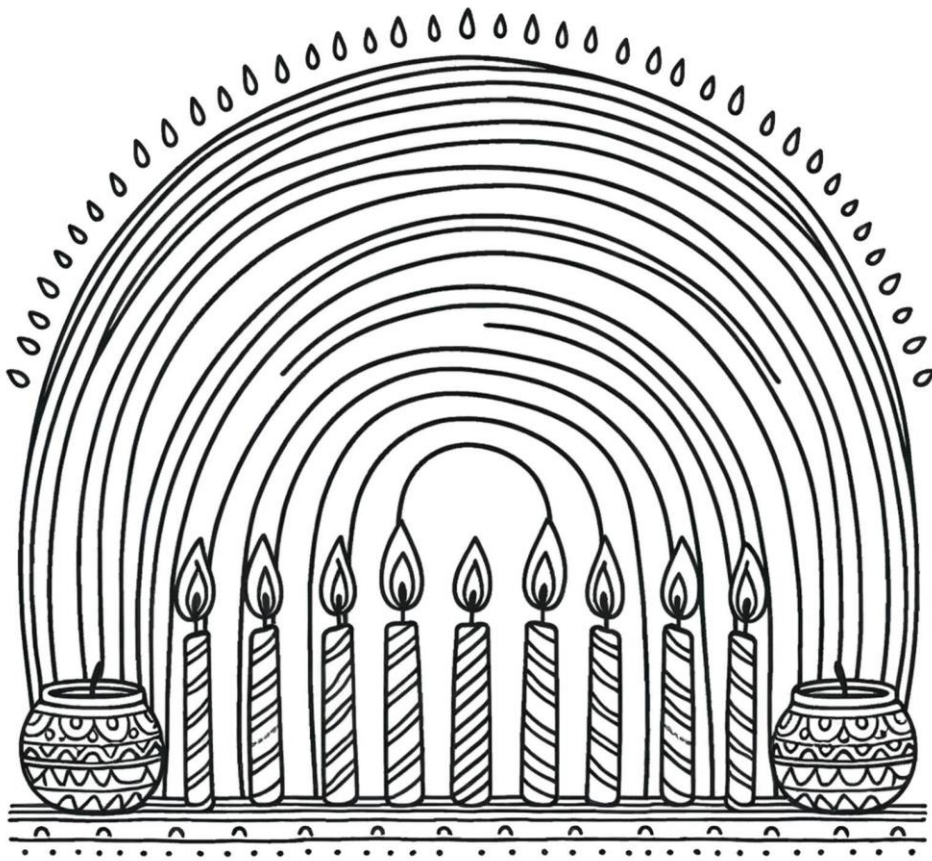
- 1½ cups flour
- 1 teaspoon baking powder
- a pinch of salt
- 1 egg
- 1 cup of milk
- Vegetable oil for frying
- Optional: honey, maple syrup, or powdered sugar for dipping or topping your bimuelos.

Preparation

- Kids can help with making the dough, rolling batter and choosing toppings. Grown-ups should handle **all** of the frying.
- Mix the dry ingredients together.
- Add the egg and milk, then stir until batter forms.
- In a frying pan, pour in your oil (about two inches high) and warm your oil to about 365 degrees.
- Drop the batter by tablespoons into the oil.
- Fry the bimuelos until they are golden on each side, about 2 to 3 minutes.
- Use a slotted spoon to transfer your finished bimuelo to a paper towel-lined plate to cool and allow the oil to drain.
- Enjoy!

PJLibrary.org also recommends wonderful holiday-themed books, including *The Chanukkah Guest* by Eric Kimmel for ages 3-5 years, *Antlers with Candles* by Chris Barash for ages 3 to 4 Years, and *All-of-a-Kind Family Hanukkah* by Emily Jenkins for ages 5 to 6 Years.

Your family might also enjoy creating a paper plate menorah. *PJsandPaint.com* has the directions.



JewishColoringPages.com

WORD SEARCH

Chanukah

M	A	C	C	A	B	E	E	S	E
L	A	T	K	E	S	S	X	O	M
I	J	N	W	Q	D	S	Z	C	V
Y	V	S	F	J	R	W	S	H	C
Q	I	P	C	D	E	Y	H	A	Y
J	G	E	L	T	I	Q	A	N	B
M	J	Y	J	Y	D	J	M	U	C
O	L	P	H	N	E	P	A	K	S
N	J	Z	T	O	L	W	S	A	O
M	E	N	O	R	A	H	H	H	S

MACCABEES

SHAMASH

DREIDEL

LATKES

GELT

CHANUKAH

MENORAH

Thank You!

... to the fantastic Bulletin Brigade who helped fold and stuff October's Bulletin: Jim and Joan Savitt; Martha Rozett; Martie Teumim; Lew Sperber; Rema Goldstein; Mark and Cheryl Reeder; Ken Tannen.

... to the following congregants who recently hosted an oneg Shabbat or kiddush lunch: Laura Keller, Melissa Putterman Hoffmann and Gary Hoffmann, Deb Adler, and Valerie Tabak.

Our Recent Kibbutzniks

Robin Belansky – In honor of **Anastasia and Josh Pendergrass's** wedding; In memory of my sister, **Cookie Neligon**

Mazal Tov!!

...to Ann Shapiro and Barry Pendergrass on the wedding of their son, **Josh Pendergrass, and Anastasia Shpurik** on Sept. 13 in New York City!

The Congregation Notes with Thanks These Contributions:

General Fund

In memory of **Doris Lowenfels** by Ellie and Randy Davis

In memory of **Hermon and Nusia Reichbach** by Rifka House

In Memory of **Elaine Toby Weinberg**, sister of Joel Blumenthal and sister-in-law of Dayle Zatlin, by Ben and Becky Marvin

High Holy Days

Edmund and Jacqueline Gutierrez; Leah Rosen; Larry Eckhaus; Carol Gnacik; Lalia Akerman, in memory of **Ary and Rosa Akerman**

Yizkor Books

Linda and Richard Strohl; Mark Silverbush and Kelly Young; Jim and Joan Savitt; Ben and Becky Marvin

Fundraising Appeal

Melissa Browne and Mary Warrener; Ann Shapiro and Barry Pendergrass; Ken Tannen; Dee Wind, in memory of **Frank Wind**; Steve and Jeanette Gottlieb; Barney Horowitz; Hedy Lowenheim; Anita Stein; Gail Golderman and Rochelle Goldfarb; Ellie and Randy Davis; Sandra Rosner and Jeffrey Haas; Nancy Maurer and Bruce Bell, in honor of our children **Matthew, Daniel and Tommy Bell**; Ellen Rubin; Julie Friedman and Bob Negris

Free Food Fridge

Melissa Browne and Mary Warrener; Laurie Shanks

Social Action Fund

In memory of **Doris Lowenfels** by Amy and Yossi Koren Roth
Jenna Beck

*Please note, some donations will be recorded a month after they are received due to technical issues.
Most October donations will be recognized in the December Bulletin while our bookkeeper is on vacation.*

The congregation mourns the recent passing of

Doris Lowenfels

Mother of Ann Lowenfels and Mother-in-law of Steve Redler

May her memory forever be for a blessing.

The following Yahrtzeits will be observed in November:

11/7

Sarah Renee Whiting; Jacques M. Gilly*; Rose Kaufman*; Robert L. Mutschler*; Anne Maurer; Norma Haas; M. Michel Dobris; Rachel Levy*; Henry Freeman

11/14

Vicki Adler; Samuel Abrams*; Julie Fiks*; Herman Schoenbach; Margaret Kleinfeld; Hortense Schwartz; Morris Raderman; Abe Turoff*

11/21

Selma B. Kuperman*; Sallie Kaplan; David Bach*; Paulette Tabak; Rose Parets*; Elenore Morse; Teddy Knee; Fred Hauptman; Estelle Nitka; Norman Rosenthal

11/28

Ruth Bosin; Irving Oblas*; Samuel K. Jaffe*; Betty Feldman; Mildred Aronson*; Nusia Reichbach*; Abraham Porter

12/5

Ray Stephany; Simon Semelisky*; Frances Rudinger; Elihu Propp*; Richard L. Brower*; Bertha Markstein Peckerman*; David Cohen*; Paul B. Blum; Emery Sennesh; Albert Marcus*; Sylvia Goldstein Marcus*

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

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

December
January

Deadline

November 12
December 10