

# *B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation*

420 WHITEHALL RD., ALBANY, NY 12208  
E-mail: [office@bnaisholomalbany.org](mailto:office@bnaisholomalbany.org)  
April 2026

Phone: 518-482-5283  
Visit us at <https://www.bnaisholomalbany.org>  
Nisan/Iyyar 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, April 3	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, April 4	EXTENDED STUDY OF THE PROPHETS (HYBRID)	10:00 AM
Friday, April 10	TOT SHABBAT	5:30 PM
	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT WITH TORAH SERVICE</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, April 11	TORAH STUDY (ZOOM)	10:00 AM
Friday, April 17	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE (ZOOM)</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, April 18	TORAH STUDY (ZOOM)	10:00 AM
Friday, April 24	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE W GUEST SPEAKERS</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, April 25	TORAH STUDY (ZOOM)	10:00 AM
Friday, May 1	<b>SHABBAT SERVICE W/ B'YACHAD FAMILIES</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, May 2	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...***

One of the first things I learned upon moving to the Capital District was that I would be living in Small-bany. Even if we are the capital city of New York, it still feels in many ways like a small town. Or, as the song says, a place “where everybody knows your name.”

Earlier this month (March), I attended the annual convention of the Central Conference of American Rabbis (CCAR), the rabbinic professional organization of the Reform Movement. With each convention I attend, I not only come home with more knowledge, professional skills and perspective, but also with new connections. At each session, I met someone new. Monday’s breakfast sat me next to a rabbi from Buenos Aires. Tuesday’s lunch included fellow rabbis from the US, Uganda and Spain. We had participants flying in from across the US, Canada and Israel (though a more limited number than usual, with the current travel challenges).

Despite our different backgrounds, primary languages, current residences, etc., I found more and more in common with each new introduction. One couple lived on Long Island, near my hometown; another colleague’s daughter is currently attending my alma mater; many of the attendees knew other colleagues from the Capital District, including Rabbi Cashman; and the Argentinian rabbi I met at breakfast actually knew one of my cousins!

For a few days in California, we came together as a microcosm of the Reform Movement. (Well, not the entire Reform Movement. Despite the growing diversity of our membership, the CCAR doesn’t represent the whole world’s worth of Reform rabbis – we focus on North America and other groups cover other regions.) Perhaps most heartening of all was that these representatives of congregations and organizations large and small, from red states, blue states and other countries could engage in respectful and meaningful dialogue about the important issues facing our shared Jewish community. We talked about what was fixed vs. flexible as we imagined possibilities for the future. We focused on the importance of democracy and its inherent value across lines of difference. And we engaged in good old-fashioned Torah study, wrestling with timeless themes of how to live well in the world as Jews and good human beings.

Yes, one could argue that this was a self-selected group and a bit of a bubble, but it reminded me of our overall adaptability, strength and resilience as a people. Similar to the exodus narrative we will recount at our Passover seder tables, we were and continue to be a mixed multitude, finding our way to freedom together.

If you’re interested in some more quality time with the local Jewish community, remember that on **Monday, April 13**, Congregation Agudat Achim is hosting this year’s Yom HaShoah service in Schenectady and on **Tuesday, April 21**, Temple Israel is hosting the Yom HaZikaron/Yom HaAtzmaut program here in Albany. On **Wednesday, May 27**, Federation is bringing Rabbi Rick Jacobs – president of the Union for Reform Judaism – to town to speak to all of us at Congregation Beth Emeth. And if you’d like a little Reform “bubble” time of your own, consider attending the URJ Biennial **December 10-13** in Philadelphia!

*L’shalom,*

Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot

## ***From Our President***

I don't know about you, but I've experienced 2-3 seasons this week. Today, like many others this month, it's a little gray after a sunny morning. I started the day with a spring season shirt, added a winter jacket when I left the house and pulled my umbrella out for this evening's travels. Setting off without knowing if we've packed everything we'll need is a vulnerable experience. Knowing what to expect and packing accordingly is likely to transform a possible event into a probable success. Planning ahead surely helps. Do you remember where you spent last year's High Holy Days? Chances are many of you were two doors down from B'nai Sholom at the JCC. That change of venue while we waited for our new heating/cooling system was no spur-of-the-moment decision. The Board discussed and researched and discussed again. Who would take us in? Where could we go and bring with us all the ritual items we use in our High Holy Day worship? What about usable wi-fi so we could keep those at home with us? We moved the High Holy Days off-site and lived to tell about it. I am finishing a list of the many steps we took during that move. We want to be prepared if we ever have to move off-site again.

This gets me thinking about what if any preparations our ancestors were able to make for their exodus from Egypt. How far ahead did they know their departure date? My guess is they knew their community was leaving and stayed tuned for up-to-the-minute details. They didn't have the luxury of off-season clothes or advice from others who had made a similar trek. And we know what happened to their bread.

They had to decide that the journey with all its unknowns would be better than staying put. Once on the road, we know there were times when they wanted to turn back or fire the caterer. I've always thought their complaints sound whiny in the Torah, but their fear was understandable. The Hebrew community made it to the Promised Land. It took several generations and multiple losses and learnings, but they arrived. That says something about our grit (and possible assistance from a higher source). Our survival is a cause for celebration. So was our venture down Whitehall Road and back. If we didn't say it enough upon our return, THANK YOU to those who schlepped our worship necessities round trip and to those who gathered to worship without knowing how comfortable the accommodations might be. Pilgrimages are work but also a cause for celebration.

Happy Passover!

*L'shalom,*

Melissa Putterman Hoffmann

## **Save These Dates!!!**

**MAY 12 - 17 SPRING CLOTHING DRIVE.** We will accept clothing for all seasons with a live, assisted drop off on Sunday, May 17, from noon to 2 PM.

**MAY 31 – JUNE 7 FAMILY PROMISE ONLINE AUCTION** with preview beginning May 24.

**SUNDAY, JUNE 14** It's Flag Day! Join us as we wave not only the red, white and blue but also our rainbow flags in the **Pride Fest parade.** Contact Becky Marvin ([beckymarvin4574@gmail.com](mailto:beckymarvin4574@gmail.com)) to show our pride in being a welcoming congregation!

## In Any Language...

Todah, Gracias, Merci, Danke, Grazie, Obrigado, Arigato, Gamsahamnida, Shukran, Spasibo, Dyakuyu.

No matter how you say it, **"Thank You!"** for all you do in enabling us to help feed our Albany neighbors.

Once every other month, we fill three Free Food Fridges in various neighborhoods in Albany. On the opposite month, we bring a significant load of groceries to the Friday evening Albany Street Soldiers site in Academy Park.

What can you do to help with these amazing programs?

\*Continue to donate Hannaford cards (thanks, Ellie Davis, for this successful fundraiser).

\*Donate to honor or remember a special person or event.

\*Volunteer to be a co-shopper/deliverer for either or both of these opportunities.

Questions? Contact Becky Marvin or Valerie Tabak.

As always, thank you for helping us keep these acts of Tikkun Olam successful.

## A Note from the Ritual Team...

Because Tu BiShvat is soon after Shabbat Shirah, the Ritual Team decided to try something new in lieu of a Tu BiShvat seder this year. We started off by circulating an information sheet to inform everyone about the holiday – thanks to Deb Adler for preparing it. We also offered Tu BiShvat-related foods at the Shabbat Shirah oneg – thanks to Katelyn Oullette DiPaola and Sharon Sklar for their help with this. Finally, we set up a collection bin for congregants to donate Tu BiShvat-related foods. We left the bin in the Social Hall for about one month, and by the time Shabbat Shirah came around it was full. We donated the food to a free food pantry outside the Shrine Church of Our Lady of the Americas on Central Avenue – thanks to Becky Marvin for this recommendation. In this photo of the pantry, our donated food is to the right on the bottom shelf.

This was a wonderful effort and a wonderful way to observe Tu BiShvat. So our final thank you goes to all who donated food. It was an amazing feeling to place the food in the box and then turn around and see people reaching in for some.

Thank you all so very much! We plan to do this again next year.



## Spotlight on New Members: Leah Rosen

*One of a series of articles from the Membership Team to introduce those who have recently joined B'nai Sholom. This month, we welcome Leah Rosen.*

I grew up in Brooklyn and Long Island and moved to the Hudson Valley (Woodstock) 29 years ago. Being part of a Jewish community has always been deeply important to me, and during my time in Woodstock I served on many committees, including the board.

I moved to Albany last May to be closer to family and, honestly, found B'nai Sholom online. When I walked in for the first time, I ran into a friend from Woodstock, Debra Burger — and I never looked back. From that moment on, it felt like home. I've found the community to be incredibly warm and welcoming.

Professionally, I'm actively involved in two related areas: career coaching (currently with a tech boot camp), and executive recruiting. I've spent most of my career in these fields, and while my recruiting firm is my own, I partner with a large nationwide network of independent recruiters.

I'm truly looking forward to participating in the many activities and programs at B'nai Sholom and getting to know everyone better.

## What's Your Favorite Chocolate Indulgence?

Love chocolate? Now is the time to share your sweet tooth!

B'nai Sholom will sponsor a basket of chocolate goodies for the Spring Online Auction to raise funds for Family Promise of the Capital Region. B'nai Sholom is a support congregation for this wonderful non-profit that supports families facing homelessness by offering shelter, case management and other services.

We are looking for both familiar and favorite items as well as gourmet items, from Hershey bars to fancy bonbons, chocolate-flavored coffee to chocolate liqueur, beer or wine. Please donate your favorite item to our basket to make it extra special. Chocolate-themed items (mugs, candles, tea towels, etc.) are also welcome along with gift cards to candy stores, bakeries and ice cream shops. Use your imagination to find items that will brighten up the collection. Just keep in mind that we will assemble the basket in early May and the auction will be held during the first week of June.

To donate an item, please contact Becky Marvin or Valerie Tabak.

## Have You Ever Swept a River?

If the answer is "no," then it's time to join other B'nai Sholom congregants as we combine forces with the Capital Region Interfaith Creation Care Coalition for a litter cleanup in the Corning Preserve in Albany as part of RIVERSWEEP! We'll be working from 11 AM until 2 PM on **Sunday, May 3**, and we'll meet at the playground off Quay Street. Come for the whole time or just for an hour. Kids welcome! It's usually a nice day on the Hudson so grab your work gloves and a "grabber" if you have one.

*Contact Barry Pendergrass for more information [bpenderg37@gmail.com](mailto:bpenderg37@gmail.com)*



## LONGEVITY SHABBAT & POTLUCK DINNER



Our Chai-Plus members will receive invitations to this May 22 event in April. The Member Events Team reminds you to RSVP to Deb Nozik (whose contact info is in the invitation) and via SignUpGenius by May 4; please be sure to contact Deb and not the Office Manager.

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 the service, and we may have a group activity at the dinner as well.

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

## **AI and Scams: How to Stay Safe and Fight Back** **Sunday, May 31, 10 AM at the Synagogue** (In-person and via Zoom)

Artificial Intelligence (AI) is elevating scams to new and even scarier levels. As digital scams become more sophisticated, can you even trust your own eyes and ears?

Now more than ever, we need to ratchet up our security game to safeguard our personal information and money.

Come to B'nai Sholom **Sunday, May 31 – 10 AM bagels/juice/coffee, 10:30 AM program** – to learn how to stay safe from the newest fraud and scams that are targeting all of us. Our own **Sean O'Connor** will arm us with the latest fraud trends to watch out for and provide tips and resources to protect ourselves and our families.

Sean is the supervisor of a team in ITS dedicated to supporting the NYS Department of Health, encompassing software development, installation, upgrades and troubleshooting. Sean also applies his knowledge to his role as website administrator for B'nai Sholom.

This program is being offered just to B'nai Sholom congregants. Watch the weekly E-announcements for Zoom link. Contact Ben Marvin [bamarvin4574@gmail.com](mailto:bamarvin4574@gmail.com) for more information.

## **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!

# **ADULT ED SPRING 2026**

## **MOVIE NIGHT (in person)**

### **"The Sea"**

Sunday, April 26 at 7:00 PM

Khaled, a 12-year-old boy from a Palestinian village, sets out from the West Bank to fulfill his dream of viewing the sea for the first time, even though he doesn't know the way nor speak any Hebrew. When his father, an undocumented laborer working in Israel, learns that his son is missing, he leaves his job in search of him – risking arrest and the loss of his livelihood. A tender and poignant drama filled with human empathy, this beautifully made film follows young Khaled on his innocent and heartfelt quest to fulfill his dream. A joint Israeli-Palestinian project, *The Sea* "offers a rare and nuanced view of contemporary Israel through an outsider's perspective, exemplifying a powerful collaboration between Jewish and Arab storytellers" (2026 Jury Prize, Miami Jewish Film Festival). Winner of five Ophir Israeli Academy Awards.

There will be a \$10 admission fee. Non-members are requested to pre-register via the website link.

## **SYNAGOGUE SCHOLAR TALK BY PHIL TEUMIM**

### **"Rock 'n' Roll Tribe - The Jews of Early Rock 'N' Roll"**

Sunday, May 17 at 10:30 AM

Preceded by Bagels and Coffee/Tea at 10 AM

Phil will talk about some of the many Jews who made significant contributions to the development of rock 'n' roll from its earliest stages up to the British invasion. The multimedia presentation will cover selected songwriters, performers, record producers, DJs, impresarios and venues of that era and a few personal experiences. All are welcome to this morning of musical exploration.

Phil is a longtime member of B'nai Sholom and an even longer-time musician and singer/songwriter. He is also the host and one of the featured performers at our regular Beit Kafeh/Coffeehouse nights.

Non-members are requested to pre-register via the website link.



## ***For Kids and Families...***

### **A Fun Craft for Families to Try**

[Akhlah.com](http://Akhlah.com) is a fun website for Jewish learning, including a variety of crafts for Jewish children. This stuffed challah is appropriate for the younger set and will be a fun addition to your child's play kitchen.

#### **Stuffed Challah**

##### **Materials:**

- 3 pantyhose legs
- Tissue or Poly-fill stuffing
- 4 x 8-inch piece of dark material (an old brown or black sock)

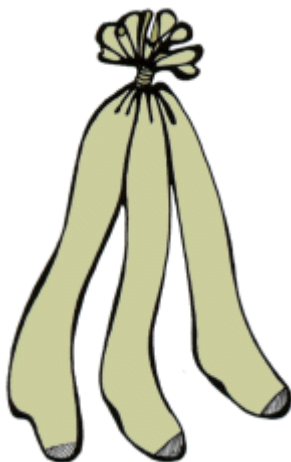
Stuff each pantyhose leg with tissue or poly-fill.

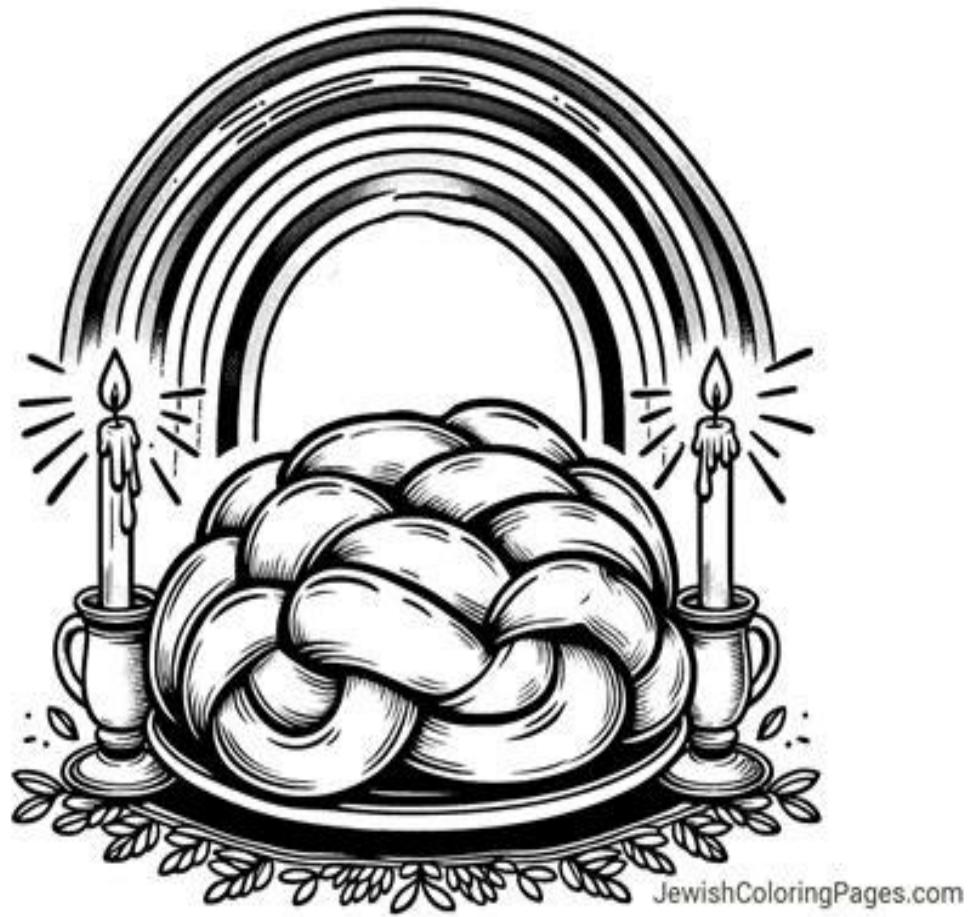
Take one end and tie all three together.

Braid them and coil them into a circle, tucking the ends in.

Cut the dark socks into eight strips. Poke them into the folds so they look like raisins, you can sew or glue them into place.

[Akhlah.com](http://Akhlah.com)





## ***Thank You!***

...to the fantastic Bulletin Brigade who folded and stuffed the March Bulletin: Lew Sperber; Ken Tannen; Martha Rozett; Anita Stein, Mari Vosburgh; Mark Reeder; Martie Teumim and Dee Wind.

...to the following congregants who recently hosted an Oneg Shabbat or kiddush lunch: Steve Morse and Brenda Hazard – in memory of Virginia Hazard and Jerome Morse; Ken Tannen.

## **The Congregation Notes with Thanks These Contributions:**

### **General Fund**

In memory of **Jonathan Tuck** by Melissa Putterman Hoffmann and Gary Hoffmann

In memory of **Elizabeth Zane Malsky** by Melissa Putterman Hoffmann and Gary Hoffmann

In memory of **Constance Goldfarb** by Melissa Putterman Hoffmann and Gary Hoffmann

In memory of **Jonathan Tuck** by Ben and Becky Marvin

In memory of **Elizabeth Zane Malsky** by Ben and Becky Marvin

In memory of **Constance Goldfarb** by Ben and Becky Marvin

### **Books for Babies**

In honor of **Carol and Doug Smith on the birth of their grandson** by Ben and Becky Marvin

### **Mishloach Manot**

Melissa Putterman Hoffmann and Gary Hoffmann

### **Adult Education**

Barney Horowitz

### **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund**

In honor of **Tara Jordan's naming** by John and Charna Jordan

### **Fundraising Appeal**

Martha Rozett; Linda and Rich Strohl

### **Free Food Fridges**

In honor of **Maggie Tabak for all her work for the Shabbaton** by Valerie Tabak

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

**The following Yahrzeits will be observed in April:**

4/3

Richard Rosenthal; Paul Rosenthal; Helga Bessac; Samuel Adels\*; Leonarda DeFronzo; Lilyan Oblas\*; Harry C. Katzin\*; Sara Steinhart; Joseph Caplan\*; Irma Schwartzman\*

4/10

Harold Lazoroff\*; Annette Mackay Tannen; Lillian Gaes Schwadron\*; Caleb Reeder Sr.; Elizabeth Stedman Tuck; Michael DeFronzo; Christa Polednik; Milton Farkas

4/17

Rebecca Miller Shultz; Gerald Minzer; Dorothy Hess\*; Hazel Propp Sohmer; Jacob Hammer\*; Sheldon Bosin; Fanny Engler\*; Mota Teumim; Rachel Abrams\*; Goldie Goldstein; Muriel Cohen\*; David Fiks; J. Milton Steinhardt\*

4/24

Larry Propp; Richard Propp\*; Judy Reeder; Anna Raderman; Edward Blumenthal; Rhoda Green; Herbert Malsky; Mark Balin; Aaron Harold Rosner; Sara Rockovitz Propp\*

5/1

Manuel Aronson\*; Joseph Ottenheimer; Anne Smuckler Paktor; Betty Altschuler Gottlieb; Selma Koota; Eleanor Zaremsky; Sidney Devore; William Lacov; Moses Khazam; Bernard Earl Shanks; Lena Wolf\*; Sophie Goldstein\*; Gertrude Sperber\*

*\*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](mailto:rabbi@bnaisholomalbany.org)

**RABBI EMERITUS:** Donald P. Cashman

**PRESIDENT:** Melissa Putterman Hoffmann can be reached at [president@bnaisholomalbany.org](mailto:president@bnaisholomalbany.org)

**OFFICE MANAGER:** Emily Pickering can be reached at [office@bnaisholomalbany.org](mailto: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 2<sup>nd</sup> 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

May

April 8

June

May 13