

# *B'nai Sholom Reform Congregation*

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

NOVEMBER 2022

CESHVAN/KISLEV 5783

*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, November 4	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT + TORAH SERVICE</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, November 5	EXTENDED STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, November 11	<b>TOT SHABBAT SERVICE</b>	<b>5:30 PM</b>
	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, November 12	EXTENDED STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, November 18	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, November 19	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, November 25	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE (ZOOM ONLY)</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, November 26	TORAH STUDY	10:00 AM
Friday, December 1	<b>KABBALAT SHABBAT SERVICE</b>	<b>7:00 PM</b>
Saturday, December 2	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...***

Shalom, B'nai Sholom!

Over the course of the High Holy Days, I focused my sermons on how we support each other and operate as a congregation. In particular, I offered Abraham some constructive criticism on how he handled the *Akeidah* (the binding of Isaac) and pointed out the benefits of teamwork.

Collaboration is the backbone of any organization, and certainly of a synagogue like ours. Whether it's brainstorming programs at a committee meeting or tackling discrete projects like building a sukkah or changing the social hall light fixtures to LEDs, many hands (and minds) make light work. Working as a team helps prevent individual burnout, transmit knowledge and generate new ideas and energy.

Nowhere is this more evident than the High Holy Days. Chances are, you played some role in making our holidays possible this year – setting up sound equipment or coordinating or serving as a technology volunteer to make services multi-access; attending a security training, scheduling or serving as an usher or parking attendant; confirming furniture arrangements and masking policies; making sure the flowers and landscaping were inviting; publicizing our services and registration process; preparing or submitting content for the Annual Guide and holiday announcement sheets; hosting a luncheon, preparing or delivering Rosh Hashanah goody bags or setting up a break-fast food order; helping mail Yizkor book letters; directing, accompanying or singing in our new HHD choir; reaching out to honorees to confirm their availability; polishing silver, setting out prayer books and changing Torah mantles; preparing and sharing a reading or blessing, chanting Torah, coming up for an aliyah, lighting a candle, blowing a shofar or helping open the ark, carry, lift, pass, undress and redress the Torah; leading or contributing to the Yom Kippur study session; putting together and running our children's programs; helping fill the sanctuary or adding your presence to the Zoom room... the list goes on. Although some individuals and committees were "subject matter experts" and had larger roles/responsibilities during the HHDs than others, or than at other times of the year, it's clear that we could not have had the same safe, meaningful, inclusive and participatory celebration without such wide involvement. THANK YOU ALL!!!

Perhaps an acutely symbolic example of our ability to work as a team was our Simchat Torah celebration on October 16. Congregants spread out around the room as we unrolled our full Torah scroll, each volunteer carefully holding up a small part of the load. Inside the circle were tables and chairs for people to be seated and help with the dressing and undressing of the Torah, as well as a roving tech volunteer who made the experience accessible to those participating remotely.

As you can hopefully see, each of us plays an important role in keeping the congregation alive and thriving. Thank you again for all you do – and all we can continue to do together in 5783.

***L'shalom,***

**Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot**

## ***From Our President...***

**(A recap of my remarks at our Erev Rosh Hashanah 5783 service.)**

**I want to start by thanking all of you for choosing to start your High Holiday season here at B'nai Sholom.** Since I can't thank each of you individually, I am going to have to thank you in groups: those who attend services weekly at B'nai Sholom; those who attend special programs here every month or two; those who attend High Holiday events here annually; and those who are attending services at B'nai Sholom for the first time. I've been thinking about why you are here – what your motivation is for attending services tonight. Here is a list of possible motives that I came up with:

- Tradition, part of your Jewish identity, sense of obligation;
- To honor your parents or grandparents, please a friend or family member, be a good role model;
- Enjoy taking time for self-reflection, looking back and ahead, doing that as part of a community;
- Curiosity, searching for something but you're not sure what or even why.

For most, your motivation is some mixture of all these reasons. Or perhaps you got caught up in a 'bait and switch' scenario. For example, you came out of a sense of obligation but ended up enjoying the time for self-reflection.

**I also want to thank the people who prepared this High Holiday program for us and to comment on their motivation for volunteering.** For services, I'll start by thanking our Rabbi, soloist and harpist. Then, the Ritual Committee, Honorees, Choir, Technology Team, Safety and Security Committee, Ushers, Children's Programming Trio and the COVID Response Committee. For food, the Hospitality and Member Events committees for coordinating our luncheons, and the Past Presidents for preparing our holiday 'Nosh Bags' and arranging our take-out Break-Fast. For publicity, I want to thank the Communications Committee, the Office Manager and all the others who coordinated the Bulletin articles, weekly e-blasts, website and social media postings, flyers, press releases, calls, mailings, Annual Guide and Yizkor books. And a final thanks to everyone who helped prepare the building and grounds for these festivities.

Here are my thoughts on what motivates people to volunteer:

- Giving back to the community;
- Sharing knowledge, skills and abilities;
- Developing new knowledge, skills and abilities;
- Enjoying working with a group, camaraderie;
- Meeting people, making new friends, seeing old friends;
- Having FUN;
- Sense of pride, feeling of accomplishment, sense of purpose;
- Filling an unmet need.

*(Continued on page 4.)*

(Continued from page 3.)

Most volunteers are motivated by a mixture of these reasons, or by a different ‘bait and switch.’ For example, they volunteered because they thought it would be fun, but they ended up completing the task only because there was no one else around to do it.

**Looking back over the past year, there have been so many opportunities to plan and attend events at B’nai Sholom.** For spiritual seekers and those that are looking for a sense of community, there have been opportunities for PRAYER: weekly Shabbat services, Social Action Shabbat, Shabbat Shirah, Tot Shabbat, Synagogue Scholar Shabbats, guest speakers (e.g. Jesse Saperstein) on Shabbat, etc. For people interested in a specific topic or who wanted to learn something new, there have been opportunities to STUDY: a well-stocked library; weekly and monthly Torah Study; classes on Hebrew, book folding, archaeology; Religious School: B’Yachad and Mifgash. For those who wanted to help repair the world, there have been opportunities to engage in ACTS OF LOVINGKINDNESS: supporting congregants in need, Books for Babies, food drives, blood drives, RAC’s Climate Change Initiative, the Capital Pride Parade, our Ukraine Benefit Concert and more. There have also been fun opportunities to get out, socialize and have a good time – for example, the brunch honoring Rabbi Cashman in June and the family barbeque in August.

**Looking ahead to the upcoming year, I want to share some of my hopes and dreams.** My *hope* is that each of you gets what you need from your experiences at B’nai Sholom. My *dream* is that if you don’t, then you somehow find a way to help B’nai Sholom change. If you notice that something is missing, then *you* help B’nai Sholom add it. If you see that something could be improved, then *you* help B’nai Sholom improve it. At our Rosh Hashanah morning service, Rabbi Weisbrot will talk a little about how to engage with B’nai Sholom. Also, the Moments Committee will continue to suggest specific opportunities for engagement tailored to our individual areas of interest. Up ahead, the Audacious Hospitality Committee will start to identify and address barriers to engagement.

**Before ‘Aleinu,’ I want to say something about baseball.** Back in 1965, Sandy Koufax famously refused to pitch Game 1 of the World Series. Why? Because ‘Jews don’t pitch on Yom Kippur.’ Flash forward to this year and I’ve been asked to do exactly that: pitch on Yom Kippur. Most other Temple Presidents will be pitching too. Of course, we won’t be pitching baseballs. We’ll be pitching for money. So until then, Shanah Tovah, everyone!

L'shalom,

Ann Lowenfels

# **Come to the B'nai Sholom Beit Kafeh (Coffeehouse)**

## **Open Mic with Featured Artists**

### **Hosted by Phil Teumim**

Join us Saturday, November 12, at 7 PM in B'nai Sholom's Social Hall

for an evening of great entertainment.

Come to listen or sign up to perform.

Sing a song, recite some poetry, tell a story, whatever you like!

First half will be open mic (Participants: please limit yourself to 2 songs or 10 minutes), followed by a 15-minute intermission.

For the second half, we'll enjoy some songs by our featured artists

### **Will Vail, Phil Teumim and special guests**

Donations and banjos accepted and encouraged. Coffee and refreshments dependent on COVID status at the time.

Hope to see you there!



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## ADULT EDUCATION – FALL 2022

### A Veteran's Day Tribute: Film and Discussion

#### The Ritchie Boys

Streaming available Friday, November 4, through Thursday, November 10  
Discussion of the Film (via Zoom) on Thursday, November 10, at 7:30 PM  
With Jill Franken Dugan and Debbie Springgate, *Daughters of a Ritchie Boy*

*The Ritchie Boys* film is the riveting, untold story of a group of young Jewish men who fled Nazi Germany and returned as soldiers in U.S. uniforms. In Camp Ritchie, Maryland, they were trained in intelligence and psychological warfare as they knew the character of the enemy better than anyone. Determined, bright and inventive, they fought their own kind of war; they were victors, not victims. "An affecting group portrait," wrote *The New York Times*.

Jill Franken Dugan, a Guilderland middle school Spanish teacher, only found out about her father's service in January 2022 when her sister, Debbie Springgate, did some searching after watching a "60 Minutes" story about the Ritchie boys. Since then, Dugan and her family have explored further her father's contribution to the war efforts and how he and other refugees were critical in helping the Allies win WWII.

Contact the office (518-482-5283) to register or use the form included to receive links to both the film and discussion. There is no charge for members; \$5 for non-members.

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#### "The Jewish Family Tree" (in person & via Zoom)

Teacher: Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot

Thursday, December 1 and 8; Wednesday, December 14

7:30 PM to 8:30 PM

\$20 non-member; \$15 member

Who started the Reform Movement? Is there more than one way to be Orthodox? Do Jews around the world all pray the same way? Come learn about the spectrum of Jewish life – how and when the different movements were born, what makes them unique, distinctions among some global Jewish communities and how all our varied branches intersect on the Jewish Family Tree.

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#### Book Folding Class

Monday, December 12, 7:00 PM to 8:00 PM

(In Person Only at B'nai Sholom)

Join us on December 12 as we bring back by popular demand Beth Oldrich, author of *Book Folding for Beginners and Beyond*, for another workshop. Book folding is the art of repurposing hardcover books into book sculptures, a modern twist on origami. It's an easy craft to learn, is eco-friendly and would be fun for ages 13 to adult. We will be making a dreidel, just in time for Chanukah. See examples of book folding projects at Beth's website: <https://sites.google.com/view/bookfolding/home>.

There is no charge and all one brings are a pair of scissors and a hardcover book at least 250 pages and 8 ½ inches tall with no photos to use for the folding. Contact the office (518-482-5283) to register or use the form included.

Beth is the daughter of temple members Bruce and Edith Goldstein.

## **Out With the Old, In With the (Relatively) New: Here's Where You Come In**

“Does this [item] spark joy? If it does, keep it. If not, dispose of it.” — Marie Kondo

Are there items at B'nai Sholom that no longer bring you joy? Like, the broken desk in the religious school office? Or the dusty fake flowers? We have received a donation of (relatively new) office furniture. We need you to bring your drills, hammers, screwdrivers and elbow grease to clean out and dispose of items in the offices and classroom to move the furniture in. Like a minyan, we need at least 10 people for this project.

**Spark joy on Sunday, November 20, at 10 AM** (bagels provided).

Please contact Maggie Tabak at [tabak.smith@gmail.com](mailto:tabak.smith@gmail.com) or 518-339-4697 to let us know you are coming to ensure that we have enough volunteers.

### **Annual Synagogue Scholars Book Talk with Martha Rozett** **Set for January 6, 2023**

**Book Talk Selection: *PEOPLE LOVE DEAD JEWS*, by Dara Horn**

Dara Horn's essay collection, *PEOPLE LOVE DEAD JEWS*, has a title that seems designed to offend or challenge the reader. Most of the 12 essays were published elsewhere in recent years and some have been the subjects of a podcast on Tablet. Horn is a terrific novelist (*THE WORLD TO COME*, *ALL OTHER NIGHTS*) with a doctorate in Hebrew and Yiddish literature. In the course of her reading, she realized that Jewish literature often lacks the kinds of happy endings, or resolutions, that we expect from fiction. She is troubled by the way readers expect “uplifting” stories about Jews and their rescuers that emphasize redemption, arguing that such stories minimize the suffering experienced by the Jewish people throughout history. Hence, her premise that people who are moved by dead Jews – Anne Frank is the preeminent example – are uncomfortable with living ones. This is a provocative book, but a timely one, for we live in a world where anti-Semitism, both subtle and violent, continues to be widespread.

In her annual book talk, a tradition begun about 15 years ago, Martha Rozett, professor emerita at UAlbany, will examine four of the essays in *PEOPLE LOVE DEAD JEWS*, leaving time for discussion: "Everyone's (Second) Favorite Dead Jew," "Frozen Jews," "Legends of Dead Jews" and "Commuting with Shylock." The program will begin following the conclusion of our Shabbat service.

## Social Action/Social Justice

*Thank you...*

...to the folks with cramped hands from writing postcards to voters with information about election protocols in their state and contact information for their Boards of Elections:



Scott Miller  
Dayle Zatlin  
Hedy Lowenheim  
Rich Strohl  
Bea Fox  
Barry Pendergrass

Gail Volk  
Shari Whiting  
Steve Gottlieb  
Linda Strohl  
Ann Shapiro

Steve Klein  
Hayden Schwartz  
Anita Stein  
Valerie Tabak  
Becky Marvin

## **CHANGE OF SEASON ... 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:

1. During the week of **OCTOBER 31 – NOVEMBER 6**  
*WHEN THE BUILDING IS OPEN\*\**
2. **SUNDAY, NOVEMBER 6**, 11 AM to 1 PM.



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

## **ON THE BALLOT**

### ***New York Voters to Decide on Environmental Bond Act***

This November, voters will have the opportunity to approve state borrowing of \$4.2 billion to support a variety of activities related to environmental quality and climate change. A list of actions to be funded by The Clean Air, Clean Water, and Green Jobs Bond Act is at the Riverkeeper website:

<https://www.riverkeeper.org/blogs/ecology/environmental-bond-act-passes-albany/>



## **Our Recent Kibbutzniks**

Joe DeFronzo            In honor of the B'nai Sholom Choir for the beautiful and melodic voices that resonated throughout the holidays. Rabbi Weisbrot, Valerie, Liz, Sarah, David, Roy, Melissa, Judy, Lois, Susan, Jesse, Mari, Martie, Doug. Great Job!!!

Jeffrey and Teresa    In honor of the installation of Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot  
Weisbrot

Rabbi Don Cashman   In honor of the installation of Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot

Lois Gordon            In memory of Bob Gordon

## **Thank You, Tech Volunteers, for our Multi-Access High Holy Days**

I want to express my personal gratitude and that of the entire congregation to Elizabeth Alowitz, Ruth Burkowsky, Bruce Goldstein, Eric Goldberg, Gail Golderman, David Liebschutz, Ann Lowenfels, Melissa Putterman Hoffmann, Carol and Doug Smith and Linda Strohl for their outstanding Zoom and camera work in bringing our services into congregants' homes on the High Holy Days. A special shout-out to Ann for her past service as Tech Coordinator and for writing the inaugural instructions for tech volunteers last year that were the basis for how we did things this year.

Seth Edelman

## **MAZAL TOV!**

... to Harvey Strum, whose article, "Yiddishkeit: Preserving Jewish Identity in Albany, 1850-1930," was published online October 8, 2022, in *New York History Review*.

## B'nai Sholom's Caring Community

The Caring Community can call on congregants who are willing and able to mobilize quickly when events such as births, bereavement and accidents make their inevitable way into our lives.

If you or someone you know needs assistance, help and support when:

- ✓ someone is sick or confined
- ✓ a new baby arrives
- ✓ there's been a death in the family
- ✓ there's a tragedy, accident or trauma

please call the office manager and/or Rabbi Weisbrot – 518-482-5283 – to notify us of the situation so we can initiate our support services.

*“On three things does the world stand: On Torah, on worship and on deeds of lovingkindness.” Pirkei Avot 1:2*

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### BE ON GUARD AGAINST EMAIL SPOOFING SCAM

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STAY ALERT! If you see a suspicious email that claims to come from Rabbi Weisbrot or someone else at B'nai Sholom, double-check the email address 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 email to the correct address for the supposed sender or call them directly to confirm.

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

### **General Fund**

In appreciation of **all the congregants whose heartfelt reading, singing and shofar blowing made the High Holy Days so special** by Becky and Ben Marvin

In honor of **Julie Fiks' Yahrzeit and the fine daughter she raised, Bettina Stoller. Julie would be very proud of Bettina for the end of life care she has given to elderly seniors that she has befriended over the years. Her husband is proud of her too,** by Howard Stoller

In memory of **Ruth Devore** by Barbara and Jack Devore

### **Golden Anniversary Fundraising Appeal: Celebrating 50 Years and Beyond**

#### **Annual Maintenance and Operations**

James and Elizabeth Davis  
Barbara and Jack Devore  
Ian Duckor  
Julie Friedman and Robert Negriz  
Roy and Judy Fruiterman  
Liz and Lorn Gingrich  
Edmund and Jacqueline Gutierrez  
Aaron Kaplan  
David and Libby Liebschutz  
David Ray and Mimi Bruce  
Laurie Shanks and Terence Kindlon  
Lew Sperber  
Jody and Brian Squadere  
Linda and Rich Strohl  
Marcia Tress

#### **Circle of Life Capital Projects**

Julie Friedman and Robert Negriz  
Liz and Lorn Gingrich  
Lew Sperber  
Marcia Tress

#### **Endowment**

Liz and Lorn Gingrich  
Maegan Knauf

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

In gratitude to **Rabbi Danielle Weisbrot for the most moving and meaningful of High Holy Days** by Becky and Ben Marvin

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

11/4 Herman Schoenbach; Julie Fiks\*; M. Michel Dobris; Robert L. Mutschler\*; Norma Haas; Anne Maurer; Rachel Levy\*; Vicki Adler; Samuel Abrams\*

11/11 Irving Kaufman; Louise Degroult; Selma B. Kuperman\*; Sallie Kaplan; David Bach\*; Rose Parets\*; Teddy Knee; Elenore Morse; Paulette Tabak; Morris Raderman; Abe Turoff\*

11/18 Fred Hauptman; Estelle Nitka; Norman Rosenthal; Joyce Malkin; Ruth Bosin; Irving Oblas\*; Lillian Golderman; Maurice Pass; Ben Waxman

11/25 Samuel K. Jaffe\*; Betty Feldman; Mildred Aronson\*; Nusia Reichbach\*; Abraham Porter; Simon Semelisky\*; Elihu Propp\*; Frances Rudinger; Ray Stephany; Seymour Schwartzman\*; Abraham Cogen

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

**RABBI:** Danielle Weisbrot can be reached at [rabiweisbrot@bnaisholom.albany.ny.us](mailto:rabiweisbrot@bnaisholom.albany.ny.us)

**RABBI EMERITUS:** Donald P. Cashman

**PRESIDENT:** Ann Lowenfels can be reached at [annlowenfels@gmail.com](mailto:annlowenfels@gmail.com)

**OFFICE MANAGER:** Christine Blackman can be reached at [christine@bnaisholom.albany.ny.us](mailto:christine@bnaisholom.albany.ny.us)

**OFFICE HOURS:** TUE/WED/THURS/FRI 9:30 AM–4:30 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.	
<u>Period Covered</u>	<u>Deadline</u>
December.....	November 9
January.....	December 14