

TERUAH

BETH SHALOM



SHEVAT
5785

The Progressive Jewish Congregation
of Auckland-New Zealand

FEBRUARY 2025

www.bethshalom.org.nz



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FROM THE RABBI

I was in shock, grasping the steering wheel tight as my car descended into the LA Basin. The entire sky was dark brown and my mouth suddenly tasted of soot. I was driving into a hot zone, collecting Jacob from my mother's house in West Los Angeles. I had seen reports of the fire, but still could not fathom the extent of the damage.

Every puff of smoke, every breath, every scent on the wind used to be something else: now, perhaps, the sofa where a grandmother loved to sit and read, now the ugly jumper someone else never wore, now a child's fingerpainting. Choking on one another's lives is an eerie feeling, at once horrific and intimate.

The Book of Exodus describes the encounters between Moses and Pharaoh. Their "negotiations" quickly devolve. With each impasse, God ups the ante by sending plagues, demonstrating Divine power over the natural world: blood, frogs, lice, insects, disease, boils, hail, locusts, darkness... With each new horror, Pharaoh acquiesces just a bit (but not enough), and the process repeats until its ultimate, wrenching, redemptive conclusion.

I've sung these plagues at seders and studied this text through the years. I've even lived through plagues (AIDS, Covid). But I had never before experienced such an otherworldly sensation as I did in Los Angeles on 9 January 2025. It was overwhelming and disconcerting, especially since much of the city was still at work: traffic lights, restaurants, appointments. Everything was the same and everything was different. Perhaps you've experienced that, too.

Why did God send plagues instead of simply changing Pharaoh's mind? And why did all Egyptians need to experience them? How deeply unjust of God to cause even the enslaved girl toiling at the millstone to suffer, when self-centered Pharaoh was an audience of one.



Because we are, all of us, complicit in systems of oppression and consumption. We, human beings who share oxygen and cities and networks, eat and wear other people's labour. Although we believe ourselves to be independent, we create one another's realities. We breathe one another's existences whether we realise it or not.

Even the kindly Egyptian benefited from cheap labour. Even the one who hated the system enjoyed its benefits.

We know by now that climate change is at work, making Planet Earth hotter, drier, wetter. Even so, we keep spewing carbon as we skip past tipping points. We who live in highly developed countries, who read these words on devices, who eat produce out of season and buy what we don't need, who drive into Los Angeles in rented cars and fly out on jumbo jets, we are responsible. We did not strike the match or wield the whip, but we added to the burden.

Abraham Joshua Heschel observed: "Few are guilty, but all are responsible."

We are the Israelites, and we are the Egyptians. The time is now; a hot wind blows for us all.

-Rabbi Dean Shapiro



FROM THE PRESIDENT

My emotions have been running high this past fortnight, watching with tension then joy and tears the video snippets and photos of the release of the seven female hostages from Gaza. I am relieved and hopeful that the cease-fire holds and that the negotiations for the second phase progress without delay.

Arzenu and Arza-New Zealand

Israeli citizens get a vote in the Knesset, but all Jews can vote at the World Zionist Congress (WZC). The WZC elections determine the political power balance in the National Institutions. A strong election result for Arzenu ensures that the global Reform/progressive movement will maximise its political influence and provide access to significant funds distributed by the Zionist movement.

How this money is spent is decided based on the strength of the various parties represented at the WZC. Arzenu supports values of religious pluralism and inclusion:

- We believe that it is unacceptable that in the Jewish State our non-Orthodox way of being Jewish is not fully recognized
- Gender equality and LGBTQ+ rights are core Jewish values for us, which is why we work with the Reform movement in Israel on these issues
- We hold Israel to account on the promise of the Declaration of Independence to “foster the development of the country for all its inhabitants” including non-Jewish minorities (from <https://www.arzenu.org/about/>).

NZ needs to vote by May for its single representative at the WZC in October. We hope the NZ mandate goes to Arza-NZ. Rabbi Rube (representing Mizrahi) and I (representing Arzenu) have been appointed by the WZO to the NZ Elections Committee – more information to come. When you renew your annual Beth Shalom membership, I hope you will opt-in to register to vote in the NZ election.

Union for Progressive Judaism (UPJ) and KiwiPJ Shabbat Gathering

I am excited that we are hosting the UPJ and KiwiPJ gathering on 21-22 March. People will be coming from all over NZ to join us for a wonderful Shabbat weekend.

We will begin with Kol Nefesh on Friday at 6.30pm and end with Havdallah on Saturday evening. Please let me or the Office know if you can help with baking, cooking, airport runs, hosting people in your home, logistics, registration, setting up the Hall, A-V, gate greeter, etc. And don't forget to register at <https://forms.gle/4zu1kamwaVgGuqHZA>

The inaugural leadership programme that I am organising with a grant from WUPJ will follow on Sunday with 26 registered participants from every KiwiPJ-affiliated community.

Save the Date: AGM Sunday 30 March at 4pm

After 3 years serving as president of the Board, I will be resigning at the AGM. If you might consider joining the Board, several Board members complete their two-year term in 2025 and there are thus vacancies for general Board positions. Please email me or Rabbi Dean if you want to have a chat about what we do and what is involved.

- Michelle Wise

IN BRIEF...



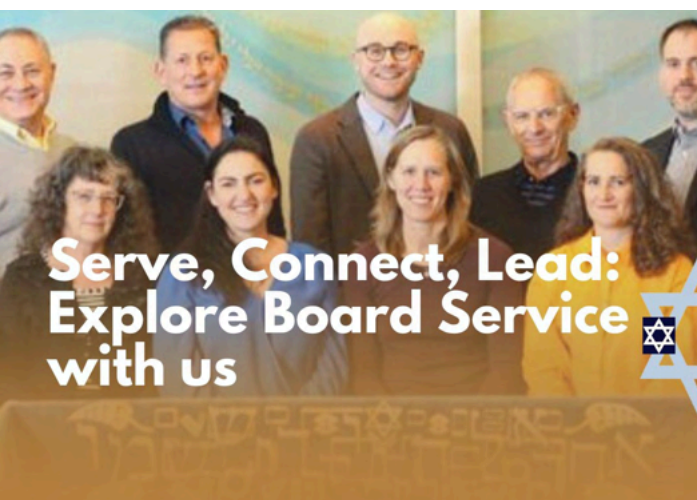
Adult Learning Course

The adult learning course with Rabbi Dean kicked-off in January 2025 with its first session. It was very well attended! It is designed to provide participants interested in a more meaningful and extended course of Jewish study, to come together to learn. The culmination of the session is either for personal development or an adult Bar or Bat Mitzvah. [Photo by Debbie Miller]



Israeli hostages released

The world held their breath when the ceasefire terms were agreed upon by all parties involved, to pause and, we pray, end this horrific war. Our hearts leapt with joy when shortly after the ceasefire the Israeli hostages were released, trickling at first with three, and then four and then more. “Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who frees captives”



Explore Board Service with us

Are you passionate about serving your community? Looking to deepen your connections and step into a meaningful leadership role? Beth Shalom invites you to explore how Board service can help you make a difference. To express your interest or simply to ask a question about Board service, get in touch with Rabbi Dean (rabbi@bethshalom.org.nz) or Michelle Wise (president@bethshalom.org.nz) today.

IN BRIEF...

California Fires 2025 - A Message from Terry Gelbart

"I arrived in LA in late November of 2023. It took nearly three months before I finally found a long term home in Pasadena. Passover snuck up on me and I found a local synagogue called Pasadena Jewish Temple and Centre (PJTC). The Second Night Community Seder there was wonderful and a friendly community greeted me. All were very curious why someone would leave the lush green paradise that is New Zealand. Thereafter, I attended festivals and services at PJTC. By September I was a member and had joined the PJTC 20/30s group.

After my return to LA in December from New Zealand, I celebrated New Years and Hanukkah with the PJTC and the 20/30s group.

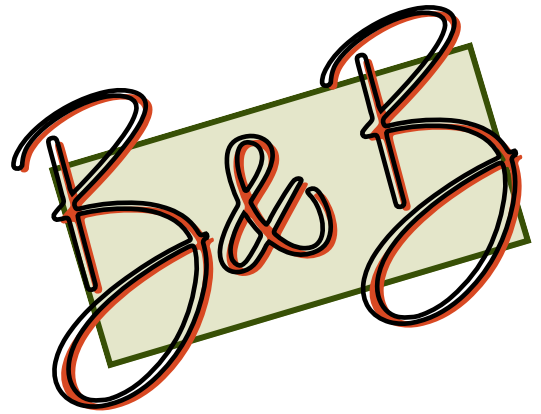
The first Kabbalat Shabbat of 2025 at PJTC was a special night, as the morning would see a young woman become Bat Mitzvah, and per our minchag she was presented a few gifts at that service.

Now as I look back and think of that Friday night, I can hardly believe that only a week later it would all be gone.

The entire temple and school were destroyed in the fire. Thirty members of our community lost their homes to that same fire. A further 45 members are displaced from their home due to damage from smoke and smaller blazes that occurred.

As I recite the words of Hashkiveinu, I think of the members who lost all shelters of peace. Please as you pray for a canopy of peace in your evening prayers, think of all those who have lost their own shelters. It will be years to make things anew but our community will stay strong with hope for the future."

NEW MEMBERS AND GROWTH



By Sonja Karon
Auckland Jewish B&B
Society

Greetings to the Beth Shalom community. We hope you've had a restful break from your usual activities.

The Auckland Jewish Burial and Benevolent Society continues to function throughout the year. During the past year we have welcomed new committee members and it is timely to introduce our committee to you. Currently the position of President is vacant but we hope this will be filled at our AGM in March. Our current committee members are: Vice President: David Zussman, Treasurer: Jack Wilton; Secretary: Sue Pezaro; Beth Shalom Board representative: Stephanie Richling; Haim Ainsworth, Julie Dick, Sonja Karon, Stephanie Markson, and David Singer. The committee meets each month to plan and review the services we provide to the community, and to consider applications for financial assistance.

The purpose of the B and B is to provide Jewish burial services and to support those who are managing end of life issues or have lost a loved one, and to provide assistance to people with particular benevolence needs. Usually benevolence is in the form of a one-off grant, for example to meet the cost of a medical appointment, an unexpected bill, or emergency travel. Requests for assistance can be made directly to the B and B committee or through Community Care.

We remind members of Beth Shalom that the B and B is a distinct entity; membership of Beth Shalom does not include membership of the B and B. However membership of Beth Shalom is not a prerequisite for membership of the B and B and a person who is not a member of any synagogue may be accepted as a member of the B and B.

The benefit of membership of the B and B is that there is no charge to members for the conduct of the funeral service and minyan whether by a rabbi or lay reader. Where a funeral is conducted for a person who is not a member of the B and B or Beth Shalom, there will be a charge for those services. It is important to note that the membership subscription for the B and B does not cover the costs of a funeral. Members of Beth Shalom and the B and B must meet the costs of the funeral director, including the plot and casket. These costs are substantial and we encourage members to plan for them.

The last year has been a busy one for the B and B with special projects as well as our usual work. The highlights were some valuable tuition from Rabbi Dean around Shiva Minyan which has provided a group of people ability to conduct a shiva minyan service, and a tachrichim sewing bee initiated by Jann Singer and Sonja Karon.



ALL TOGETHER NOW!

Beth Shalom's learning program for children, YACHAD, is about to begin another year. This is the place for Jewish kids to hang out with other Jewish kids, explore Jewish values and customs, learn Hebrew and prayers. It's a happy, easygoing place. Our first session is on **Sunday, 9 February at 2pm.**

HEBREW LANGUAGE

We meet weekly, online only, to learn Hebrew. Sessions are engaging and highly interactive, with students are divided by level.

JEWISH VALUES

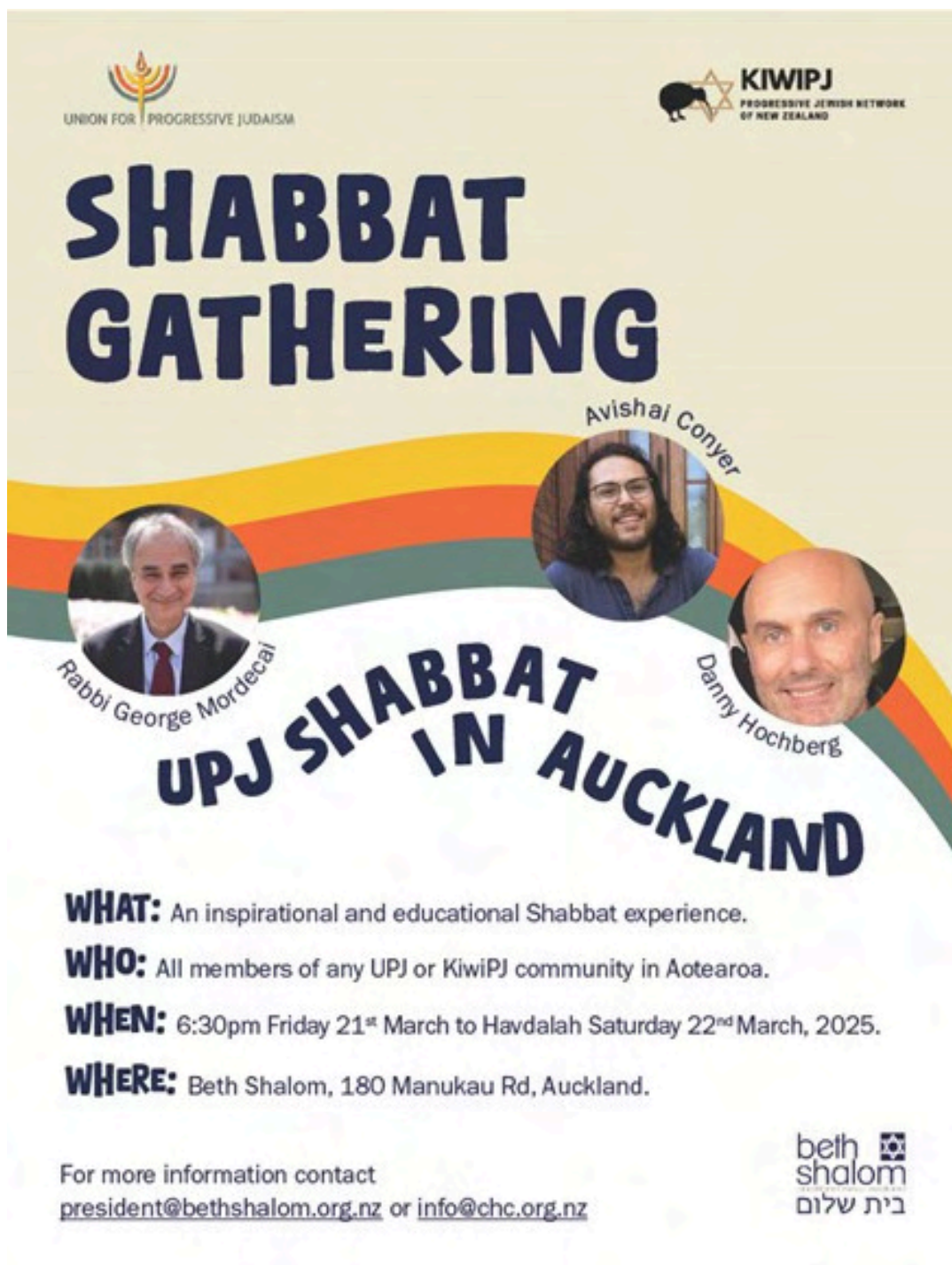
We meet fortnightly, in person, on Sunday afternoons. Rabbi Dean leads t'filah for the whole school, then students divide into three classes (7 & 8 year-olds, 9 & 10, and 11 & 12).

ENROLLMENT

To learn more or to get registration forms for your children or grandkids, contact educator@bethshalom.org.nz or use this link: [2025 Yachad registration form](#)



WUPJ GATHERS IN AUCKLAND



The poster features a light beige background with a large rainbow wave graphic. At the top left is the logo for the Union for Progressive Judaism (UPJ), and at the top right is the logo for KiwiPJ (Progressive Jewish Network of New Zealand). The main title 'SHABBAT GATHERING' is in large, bold, dark blue letters. Below it, three circular portraits of men are arranged along the rainbow wave. The names 'Avishai Conyer' and 'Danny Hochberg' are written above their respective portraits. The name 'Rabbi George Mordecai' is written below his portrait. The text 'UPJ SHABBAT IN AUCKLAND' is written in large, bold, dark blue letters across the middle of the rainbow wave. At the bottom, there is a section with details about the event, including 'WHAT:', 'WHO:', 'WHEN:', and 'WHERE:'. The contact information for Beth Shalom is provided at the bottom left, and the Beth Shalom logo is at the bottom right.

SHABBAT GATHERING

Avishai Conyer

Rabbi George Mordecai

Danny Hochberg

UPJ SHABBAT IN AUCKLAND

WHAT: An inspirational and educational Shabbat experience.

WHO: All members of any UPJ or KiwiPJ community in Aotearoa.

WHEN: 6:30pm Friday 21st March to Havdalah Saturday 22nd March, 2025.

WHERE: Beth Shalom, 180 Manukau Rd, Auckland.

For more information contact
president@bethshalom.org.nz or info@chc.org.nz

beth shalom
בית שלום

CRAFT MARKET IN MARCH

Our Craft Market, held in conjunction with the Purim Spiel, hopes to be bigger and better this year.

Do you have a hobby or a craft that you would like to showcase at our Craft Market:

- Homemade preserves, pickles, jam, bottled fruit etc
- Painting, art work, greeting cards
- Pottery
- Jewellery
- Plants, seedlings

Calling Crafty Kids ...



We also have an exciting initiative this year - we would like to invite our talented youngsters in the community to set up (or share) a stall with their own handmade crafts eg jewellery, place mats, magnets, lollies or cookies to sell at the market.

We are calling for stall holders at this time – there is no stall fee although we do ask that if able, a donation is made to Community Care. The Market Day is also a fund raiser to help Community Care to continue their work in the community.

Last year's stall holders – we look forward to seeing you again this year.

Date: Sunday March 16th

Time: 3pm – 5:30pm

There will be more information in the March Teruah and the weekly notices but if interested please either email office@bethshalom.org.nz or contact me email shiller@orcon.net.nz

By Chris Shiller
Community Care Leader

A NEW ERA FOR MOISHE HOUSE AUCKLAND



After nearly four years, the time has come for the current Moishe House residents, Sapeer Mayron, Seth Schanzer and Daniel Josephs, to pass on the torch to the next group of keen Jewish flatmates in Auckland.

Applications are now open for at least three wonderful Jews between the ages of 22 and 30 to take on the mantle of being the Auckland Moishe House – running or hosting regular events for our young adult/young professional community!

What is Moishe House?

Moishe House is the global leader in peer-led Jewish young adult engagement between the ages of 22 and 32. Moishe House operates 159 houses across 30 countries. Moishe House's mission is to provide an answer to the perennial question facing Jewish diaspora communities: how do we engage young Jews in their 20s and 30s?



Moishe House's answer is simple. It has created a model in which young Jews are empowered to build their own Jewish communities and programming, by turning their home into the hub of Jewish life for their friends and peers. Moishe Houses are led by three-to-five residents who share a rented home in which they host events for their peers in exchange for a rent subsidy.

Moishe House Auckland

Moishe House Auckland was established in early 2016 as a pluralistic and non-denominational community for Jewish young adults and young professionals. Our community comprises Jews (and their partners) of all backgrounds from modern orthodox, to reform, to the unaffiliated. Our mission is to create a thriving Jewish community of young adults in Auckland.

We run 4-5 events per month, using our flat as a base. We host anywhere between 10 - 50 people at our events, depending on the type of event. We are the largest provider of programming for Jewish Young adults between the ages of 22 - 32 in New Zealand. Since 2016, over 500+ individual participants have attended an event at Moishe House Auckland and we have facilitated over 300+ programmes or activities (e.g. shabbat dinners, seders, hikes, shabbaton, Purim parties, Tikkun Leil, Reverse Tashlich, Torah study sessions, weekly social soccer, chagim, Judaica arts and crafts, and interfaith events).

“WE HOST ANYWHERE BETWEEN 10 - 50 PEOPLE AT OUR EVENTS, DEPENDING ON THE TYPE OF EVENT. WE ARE THE LARGEST PROVIDER OF PROGRAMMING FOR JEWISH YOUNG ADULTS...IN NEW ZEALAND.”

**A
NEW
ERA**

Our events are designed to celebrate and embrace diversity within Judaism as an ethnic and cultural identity, and to empower our peers to be leaders in the Jewish community.

“Speaking personally, running Auckland’s Moishe House for the last three and a half years has been a blur of Shabbat dinners, chagim, cooking, movie nights, outings around town, hikes in the Waitākeres and the most wonderful conversations. I’ve made my closest friends through this experience, and I am really proud of the work we’ve been doing to make sure Jews here have somewhere to call home, to feel safe and comfortable and kvetch together.” - Sapeer Mayron

Apply now!

We’ll be handing over the reins from June 2025: so if running a Moishe House from your flat sounds like a bit of you, start your application today by contacting one of us or our house manager Harry Kelly: harry.kelly@moishehouse.org.

B’shalom,

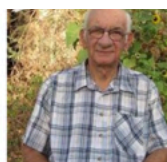
Daniel Josephs: (danielcjosephs@gmail.com)

Sapeer Mayron: (sapeer@mayron.net.nz)

Seth Schanzer: (seth.schanzer@gmail.com)



NOTICES



PROGRESSIVE ZIONISM WEBINAR SERIES

In memory of Dr. Michael Livni z"l

Working together to build a common language for
identity, dialogue, and advocacy.

Webinar 1: Defining Progressive Zionism and its core values



February 3rd, 9:30 AM Israel & South Africa | 3:30 PM Hong
Kong | 6:30 PM Melbourne | 8:30 PM Auckland

February 3rd, 9 PM Israel | 8 PM Paris | 7 PM London |
4 PM Bs. Aires & São Paulo | 2 PM EST | 11 AM PST

This four-part webinar series, beginning on February 3rd, is designed to deepen our shared understanding and create a common language that reflects the diverse cultural, political, and social contexts of our communities. Together, we'll explore how empathy and dialogue can help us advocate for Progressive Jewish values, support Reform Jewish communities in Israel, and contribute to a vision of a democratic Jewish state. To learn more and register: <https://wupj-org.zoom.us/meeting/register/DedrntPdQeSFL9ZwTUTGLQ#/registration>

Shabbat Pot Luck Friday 7th Feb

Bring a pescatarian main or a salad
plus a dessert to share.



Please no strawberries or heated garlic as we
have members with serious food allergies!

Community Potluck

The whole community is invited to join us Friday evening (7 February) for a special Shabbat potluck! Please bring a pescatarian main or salad, plus a dessert to share. Please kindly avoid strawberries or heated garlic due to allergies. We'll also welcome 6 members from Kibbutz Yahel, with one sharing insights on life in Israel post-7 October '23 during the service. There will be a craft table for children. We look forward to seeing you!

NOTICES



Crafty Club & Community Care

Our first Crafty Club Meeting for 2025!

When: Saturday February 8th in the shul hall.
Time: 12:30-2:00pm

Do you knit, crochet, paint, draw, sew, embroider or even just do colouring in?

All ages and skills very welcome, come and share your crafty talents with the group and maybe learn new skills as well as enjoying good conversation and refreshments.

Celebrate Tu B'Shvat with us

All are welcome to join us under the fig tree on Sunday, 9 February at 4:30 PM to celebrate Tu B'Shvat, the New Year for Trees! Come and let's enjoy fruits, chocolate, wines, and juice as we share prayers and readings in a joyous seder.

Our tzedakah this year will go toward planting trees in Israel through the Jewish National Fund (\$20 per tree). Please bring cash to contribute. Don't forget your gardening gloves as we care for our Etrog tree. RSVP by Tuesday, 4 February 2025 to office@bethshalom.org.nz. We can't wait to celebrate with you!

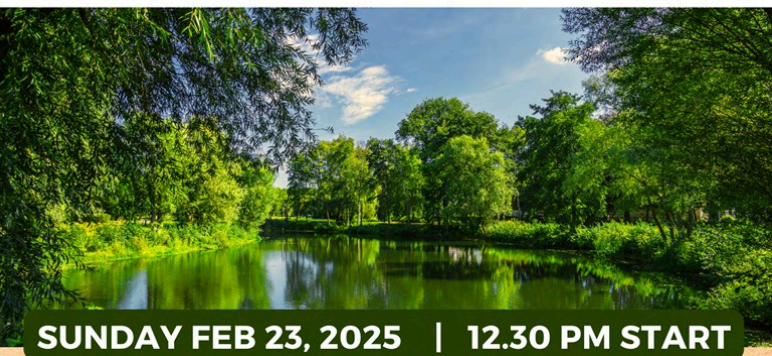


8th Peacenic 2025 event

The Council of Christians and Muslims warmly invites members of the Jewish community to join their Peacenic 2025 event on Sunday 16 February at 12.30pm. The event venue is the Mt. Roskill War Memorial Park, it is an outdoor event so dress appropriately to the weather and bring-your-own lunch. There will be activities for children, and facilities for play and players available on the day.

NOTICES

CREEK CLEANUP



SUNDAY FEB 23, 2025 | 12.30 PM START

Interfaith Creek Clean-up

The Auckland Interfaith Council invites all those interested and available to a creek cleanup on Sunday afternoon, 23rd February, starting at 12.30pm. Meet at Whenuapai, Auckland. Working together in faith, we can make Whenuapai creek a cleaner place! Join us for a day of learning about conservation - All are welcome! Please save the date and share amongst your connections. Contact Paul Wilton 021 676 076 or email nzaifc@gmail.com

US Citizens Greeter

If you are interested or you can help be a greeter please get in touch with Rabbi Dean via email - rabbi@bethshalom.org.nz

Calling All AMERICANS

Beth Shalom has seen an uptick in requests from American Jews

considering immigration to New Zealand. We'd like to create a team of people willing to answer basic questions about life here, and perhaps take them to coffee/join them at synagogue when they visit.



Can you be a greeter?



Purim Spiel 2025

Purim is on the 16th of April this year. We are in the planning stages for our Purim Spiel, and we want you to join us. Express or register your interest with Rabbi Dean.



NOTICES



Missing Glass Mixing Bowl

Missing since Chanukah – one large glass mixing bowl. This is my very favourite bowl for making gefilte fish/fish cakes and Pesach is not far away!

If you have borrowed it or have seen it around please contact me and I'll organise for its return.

Thanks, Chris Shiller

Email: shiller@orcon.net.nz or mobile 0211774934



Zoom services etiquette

We welcome people to join our service zooms and are pleased that our zoom facility makes services accessible for people, not only in Auckland, but who live outside of Auckland. However, we do have one request as part of our Zoom Etiquette.

Please identify yourself with your name so that we know who has joined our Zoom. We are not asking for you to have your camera on, but we do appreciate it when your camera is on, as it makes us feel we have an online congregation. However, we do need some identification for security purposes. We know that zoom meetings can be gate crashed so that is why we are asking for some identification by way of a name. If this does not happen, and we have asked you through the chat to identify yourself, then you may be removed from the service. Removal will be our last resort if we fail to establish your identity. Thank you in advance.

If you are forwarding our zoom links for overseas family for a simcha such as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, please also ask them to identify themselves with a name.

SECURITY NOTICES

BETH SHALOM SECURITY PROTOCOL



Swift entry and exit

Please enter and exit the gates swiftly, ensure they are fully closed.



No entry without clearance

Please do not admit entry to anyone you do not know. Please do not linger on the street in front.



Large bag entry restrictions

Please refrain from bringing big bags to the synagogue. They will be checked, and you might be refused entry.



Be alert at all times

Please have a heightened level of awareness and vigilance at all events and services, be aware of threats, and report any suspicious activity.



Report unusual activity

If you see something unusual, report it to the security guard, service leader or to the office.

In case of emergency, contact the Police first on 111 and then call CSG on 0800 282 527

File incident reports with CSG at <https://csg.org.nz/report-an-incident/>
File police reports with NZ Police at <https://webforms.police.govt.nz/en/form/hurt-damaged-stolen>

CONTACTS

Prayers for Healing

If you would like our home prayer group to pray for healing for you or for someone close to you, please advise the office. Email: office@bethshalom.org.nz

Kvetch and Kvell: Feedback at Beth Shalom

To give constructive feedback - whether positive or negative - please email: feedback@bethshalom.org.nz

Tzedakah - Auckland Women's Refuge

We are collecting donations for the Auckland Women's Refuge - non-perishable food supplies, warm clothes for children aged 13-19yrs old and general supplies. For more information on how you can help contact Chris Shiller (shiller@orcon.net.nz).

Affiliated with the Union for Progressive Judaism (UPJ)

Charities Commission Registration Number CC29542
PO Box 26 052, Epsom, Auckland 1344, New Zealand

Telephone: 09 524 4139

Email: office@bethshalom.org.nz (Office Coordinator)

Website: www.bethshalom.org.nz

Communications: communications@bethshalom.org.nz

Assistant Administrator: administrator@bethshalom.org.nz

Board of Management

President - Michelle Wise, president@bethshalom.org.nz

Treasurer - Tamara Liebman, treasurer@bethshalom.org.nz

Secretary - Roger Reynolds, secretary@bethshalom.org.nz

Board members - Michael Robinson, Trudi Sawyer, Stephanie Richling, Hilary Hemmins, Daniel Josephs, Arie Rosen, and Mika Daniels

Board of Trustees - David Kranz, Judith Marks, Peter Bruell

Ex-Officio & Rabbi - Rabbi Dean Shapiro, rabbi@bethshalom.org.nz

Membership - memberships@bethshalom.org.nz

Community Care [including Senior Outreach]

Email: shiller@orcon.net.nz or care@bethshalom.org.nz

Auckland Jewish Burial & Benevolent Society

Email: secretary@ajbbs.org.nz or treasurer@ajbbs.org.nz

Security - Board Representative & Security Working-Group

Email: office@bethshalom.org.nz

Education - Yachad & Hebrew School

Email: educator@bethshalom.org.nz

Ritual

Email: services@bethshalom.org.nz