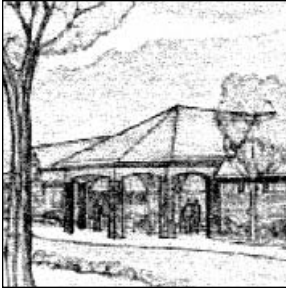


Our History



Origins:

Beth Haverim and Reform Temple of Suffern-Shir Shalom

In October, 1970 a small group of families responded to a notice in a local newspaper to become a part of a new Reform Congregation in Bergen County, New Jersey. In February, 1971, twenty-two members adopted a constitution. In August, 1976, the community chose a Hebrew name, Beth Haverim, meaning "House of Friends."

Reform Temple of Suffern-Shir Shalom was founded in 1971 with 10 families from Rockland and Orange Counties in New York and Bergen County, NJ. The synagogue purchased its original building in 1976, and expanded to a new sanctuary which was completed in 1987. The building was expanded once again in 1993.

Our future:

Beth Haverim Shir Shalom

In the summer of 2007, the two congregations merged to become Beth Haverim Shir Shalom, and today we are thriving. From small beginnings we continue to grow as a House of Friends. From a modest start, we ever seek to be a Song of Peace. Sharing, learning, giving, enjoying, we take all that Reform Judaism has to offer.



A Word from our Rabbi....



Hillel said: *Al tifrosh min hatzibur* - do not separate yourself from the community.

At Beth Haverim Shir Shalom, we work hard every day to continually create a community of value and nurturing that will be worthy of your membership.

Al tifrosh min hatzibur.

Come and see what this thriving community has to offer.

Celebrate Shabbat and the festivals in our new sanctuary with our dynamic new cantor.

Be a part of our congregation's commitment to social justice.

Be a part of our love and support of the State of Israel.

Connect to our outstanding Adult Education Programs.

Give and receive support as a part of our Caring Committee.

Al tifrosh min hatzibur.

Come and see what we offer your children.

From weekly childcare during services to programs for preschoolers, from an outstanding religious school to a dynamic informal education program, from family education to family retreats, there are doorways here waiting for you to enter.

Al tifrosh min hatzibur.

Never before has connection to a spiritual community been more important. For yourself, for your family, being a part of a warm congregational family can help make Jewish life come alive. Come enjoy the fruits of the labors of a congregation with thirty years of roots in Northwest Bergen County. Come be a part of an ever-evolving and growing congregation. Bring your ideas and enthusiasm. We look forward to welcoming you.

L'shalom,

Rabbi Joel Mosbacher

A Word from our Cantor....



Shalom! My name is Cantor David Perper, and I have been happily married to Cantor Faith Steinsnyder for nine wonderful years. I have been leading worship, studying Jewish music, and performing for half of my life. I hold degrees from Montgomery College, Rockville, M.D.; The Catholic University of America, Washington., D.C., and the Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion's School of Sacred Music in New York City.

My love for singing and my search for spirituality caused me to seek out mainly Jewish musical experiences. I have concertized and participated in master classes here and abroad, and in June of 2000, I was honored by my congregation at services and presented with an official entry into the temple archives with certain special mention, as well as other gifts. In that same year, I was the featured soloist with the Lewandowsky Choir in Amsterdam at the Jewish Music Festival. I sang as a featured cantor at the Gala Concert of the Union of American Hebrew Congregations Biennial Convention in Atlanta, Ga. In 2001, I took a few years away from synagogue life to sing opera and found the life rewarding in many ways. I sang leading roles in various regional American opera houses in Florida, Mississippi, Texas, New York, and Connecticut. However, having missed many aspects of the spiritual life as well as community service, I am now continuing my pulpit career.

I have served the following communities: Temple Sinai, Milwaukee, Wis.; Temple Ohev Sholom, Harrisburg, Penn.; Temple Shalom, Aberdeen, N.J.; Holy Blossom Temple, Toronto, Canada; Temple Judea, Doylestown, Penn.; and Temple Beth Ami, Rockville, M.D.

Please feel free to drop by during my office hours (Monday 1:30-3:30 p.m.), or call my office at the synagogue.

A Message from our President...

Some of my friends recently asked, “Why would you want to be president of the synagogue again?” My response was simple. Being President of Beth Haverim earlier this decade was an enormously rewarding personal experience, and being President of Beth Haverim Shir Shalom will be even better! As we bring together our collective traditions, talents and teachings, we can accomplish even more as we strive to build a tight-knit Jewish community spanning Bergen and Rockland counties. If you are already a member and would like to contribute to our future successes, I welcome your thoughts, assistance and participation. We have numerous avenues to become involved, on as small or large a scale as you choose, ranging from social action to music to adult education. If you’d like some guidance as to how you can take that first step, please speak with any committee chairperson or Board member. If you are not yet a member, please stop by for Shabbat services, for one of our special events, or just for a casual visit with our Rabbi, Cantor or school principal. And for any questions or input on how we can make BHSS an even better place, please give me a call at 646 364 8417 or send an email to harvey.weinberg@oliverwyman.com.

—Harvery Weinberg

Worship



Ivdu et Adonai B'Simcha - "Serve God with joy." This is the hallmark of our congregational worship experience. We seek to create a warm and welcoming atmosphere for members and guests alike.

Friday night Shabbat Services are celebrated each week at 8:00 p.m., led by Rabbi Joel Mosbacher. In addition, when one of our children becomes a bar or bat mitzvah, our community celebrates at Saturday morning Shabbat services at 10 a.m. We enjoy singing the liturgy using both traditional and contemporary melodies led by Cantor Barbra Lieberstein. The balanced use of English and Hebrew makes our services both inspiring and understandable. After services, members and guests enjoy an Oneg Shabbat.

We celebrate High Holy Days, Festivals and holidays at their appointed times in the Jewish calendar. Additionally, a Family Service is held one Friday night each month. At this abbreviated service beginning at 7 p.m., our liturgy is especially "child friendly," and all congregants and guests celebrating birthdays in that month are honored.

Other special services include a Music Service, in which Cantor Perper teaches congregants new melodies to songs and prayers and an annual Service of Healing, which was created to provide a time of peaceful meditation and prayer for those in need of physical or emotional healing, perhaps because of an illness or the loss of a loved one. These special services promote the feeling of community and intimacy that really sets Beth Haverim Shir Shalom apart.

Every child is different. Some children feel comfortable sitting in services. For others, it's a difficult thing to ask of them. In order to make it possible for our families to feel welcome every Friday evening, we offer babysitting for children aged six and under during Shabbat evening services. The only exception is for our monthly family service, which begins at 7 p.m. and is geared to children and their families. On family service night, there is no babysitting. Your children of any age are always welcome to sit with you during our Shabbat evening service; however, please know that this babysitting program is available and that you are welcome to worship with us while your young children play under the watchful eyes of our sitter.

Our Community

SISTERHOOD

The Sisterhood of Beth Haverim Shir Shalom serves the North Bergen County community through its sponsorship of educational programs, fundraisers and social events. These dedicated women contribute annually to their parent organization, Women of Reform Judaism, as well as to our Building Fund and Operating Fund. They give special gifts to the synagogue and to each b'nai mitzvah and confirmand. Supporting synagogue youth is a top priority for Sisterhood. This commitment prompted the recent establishment of the Barbara Weiss Memorial Fund that provides scholarships for youth leadership-development programs. In addition, Sisterhood donates meals, clothing and household furnishings to a local women's shelter. Each year, among many other events, Sisterhood hosts a pool party, a paid-up member program and a Chanukah Brunch. They also hold a Sisterhood Shabbat and Miriam Seder to offer special spiritual opportunities for all members of Beth Haverim. For information, contact us.

BROTHERHOOD

The Brotherhood of Beth Haverim Shir Shalom (BHSS) is dedicated to serve the adult males of our community by promoting programs of interest to men (religious or secular), providing means for family activities as well as social interaction to strengthen our ties to the community in a Jewish context.

Through our affiliation with the Men of Reform Judaism (MRJ) (<http://www.nftb.org>), your membership in the Brotherhood of Beth Haverim helps support the following programs through the Union for Reform Judaism:

Jewish Chautauqua Society (JCS) - JCS has worked on inter-faith programs for over 100 years.
Reform on Campus (ROC) – ROC provides grants for programs the nation's college campuses to serve Reform Jewish youth.

ACHIM Corps - MRJ's Achim Corps program addresses the secular and spiritual concerns of the male members of our community. Some of the programs provided are the Men's Health Initiative, Men and Observance Series, and the Men and Contemporary Roles Program.

YOUTH GROUP

Beth Haverim's Youth Group, for children in grades 8-12, offers a variety of social and community service-oriented activities. It is part of the North American Federation of Temple Youth - Garden Empire Region (NFTY-GER), an organization which includes approximately 50 youth groups affiliated with Reform Synagogues in New Jersey. A Junior Youth Group is also available for children in 6th and 7th grades.

Our Community

SOCIAL ACTION

Members of the congregation participate in a number of community service activities each year. The Michelle Mitzvah Group sponsors events primarily benefiting sick and/or underprivileged children, including a holiday party and spring picnic at Blythedale Children's Hospital. Among its other activities are the annual CROP Walk to raise money for the hungry, a coat drive, a blood drive, helping at a homeless shelter, and more.

ADULT EDUCATION

Recognizing that education is an ongoing process, we are constantly looking for new ways to challenge the adult members of our community. Some of our most popular programs include Torah study, offered twice a month on Sunday mornings, "Jewish University," a monthly series of discussions on a variety of topics related to Judaism, and "Hebrew in a week" an intense four-session course in reading Hebrew. Other adult education experiences include trips, book discussions and a variety of guest speakers.

OUTREACH

Beth Haverim Shir Shalom welcomes PEOPLE FROM ALL BACKGROUNDS from surrounding communities to learn about Reform Judaism. We offer free mini-classes and special educational programs with area churches. Our monthly interfaith couples' discussion group provides a welcoming place for open exploration of many common concerns and questions.

THE ADULT CHOIR

The adult choir, comprised of 14 singers and growing, performs at special events during the year. This includes High Holidays, "Friday Night Live," Shabbat Shirah, and the annual Reform choral festival. The choir rehearses once a week for a few weeks before a service under the direction of Cantor Perper.

Our Religious School



Beth Haverim offers a one-day-a-week religious school program for children in Kindergarten through seventh grade. Confirmation classes for eighth, ninth and tenth graders are also offered, culminating in a confirmation ceremony at the end of the tenth grade year.

At Beth Haverim Shir Shalom's religious school, we take pride in instilling a sense of Jewish identity through a curriculum encompassing tradition, customs and celebrations that emphasizes the meaning of Reform Judaism and the role of the Jew in the modern world. The program includes, among other things, Torah study, history, ethics, Hebrew, prayer, music and b'nai mitzvah preparation.

Our preschoolers meet monthly to learn about holiday celebrations and enjoy music and craft projects.

Our religious school year runs from September through May, and classes meet as follows:

Sunday - Grades 3, 4, 5 & 6 Family School - 9:00 am - 11:45 am

Sunday - Grade 6 - 9:00 am - 11:30 am

Monday - Grades K-2 - 4:00 - 5:30 pm

Monday - Grade 3 - 4:00 - 6:00 pm

Monday - Preschool - 4:00 - 5:30 pm (Once a month)

Monday - Kadimah 7:00 - 9:00 pm

Tuesday - Grade 4 - 4:00 - 6:30 pm

Tuesday - Grade 5 - 4:00 - 6:30 pm

In order to enroll your child in Religious School (grades K-10), you must be a member of Beth Haverim Shir Shalom. For additional information about membership, please call the office at 201-512-1983.

For more information about religious school, email schoolatbethhav@optonline.net or contact: Rebecca McVeigh, Principal.