

“A Five Star Experience”

If our father Jacob would have written a Yelp review of his stay at the beginning of this week’s portion Vayeitzei, it would have sounded something like this: “The beds were as hard as earth, which they probably were. The pillows felt like rocks, which they definitely were. And the AC was broken. I was shivering like I was on a mountain in the middle of the wilderness. But, my dreams were the best. I especially loved the ladder going up from the heavens to the earth! Five stars!!!”

It turns out the open air hotel Jacob stayed in on his way to his family in Haran wasn’t all that bad. I know because many years ago as an undergraduate in college I slept on it. My friends and I spent a night lying on rocks right by the Dead Sea. And, while I’ve never been physically more uncomfortable, the views of the stars were spectacular. To be out under the cover of the Judean hills in the same way my ancestors did thousands of years before was awe inspiring. And to do so with good friends was even better.

As many of us travel for the Thanksgiving holiday, we should always remember that a Five Star Experience may have less to do with the actual accommodations, and more to do with the overall experience.

Happy Thanksgiving and Shabbat Shalom,
Rabbi Alex

Shiva

Chris Mendetta

Sheloshim

Milton S. Dudek

Karl Jonathan Iggers

Julian Lindsay Kaufman, grandson of Joyce Kaufman

Daniel Page

Yahrzeits

Hilliard Abelson

Harry Bernhardt

Gladys Burwick

Gertrude Altman
Covett

Keith Crandall

Essie Feinberg

Morris J. Foreman

Isadore Friedman

Lucille Friedman

Anne Gellin

Herbert Gross

Emma Harrison

Lester Horwitz

Elinore Ella"
Hurwitz"

Georg Iggers

Rebecca Jacobs

In Memoriam

Joseph Levin

David Majeski

Robin Lee Metz

Gertrude Mittleman

Sura-Genya Modik

Millie Niss

Seymour Rauch

Rose L. Rosengarden

Jeannette Rivo

Freda Rubin

Deborah Schmeidler

David Schulefand

Joyce Seitz

Bernard Sellers

Florence Serotte

Cynthia Lee Siegel

Peter N. Simon

Milton Slutsky

Leonard Snyder

Franc Stern

Ethel Tanski

Herman Weinstein

Murray Wolfe

Stephen Zappia

Erev Shabbat Service
Friday, November 28, 2025/8 Kislev, 5786
7:00pm



Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein
Cantor Arlene Frank
Executive Director Joanne Marquisee
B'COL Religious School Director Rabbi Einav Symons
President Joseph Glickman

CONGREGATION SHIR SHALOM
In Person Events & Virtual Services

Saturday November 29th

9:00 am Torah Study-offsite and via Zoom
10:45 am Shabbat Morning Service and Kiddush Luncheon– Offsite

Sunday November 30th

9:00 am B’COL Religious School– Closed

Monday December 1st

Office Closed
7:00 pm Women of Shir Shalom Discussion Group via Zoom only

Tuesday December 2nd

1:30 pm Rabbi Alex and Rev. Bill Hennessey at The Amberleigh
2:30 pm Tikkun Olam Committee Meeting with Rabbi Alex via Zoom
7:00 pm Executive Committee Meeting via Zoom

Wednesday December 3rd

6:30 pm Buffalo Jewish Federation and Foundation For Jewish Philanthropies
Annual Meeting– offsite
7:00 pm Mussar Class

Thursday December 4th

8:00 pm Talmud Study via Zoom– Canceled

Friday December 5th

6:00 pm Erev Shabbat Family Service
7:00 pm Oneg Shabbat

UPCOMING EVENTS

The B'COL Junior Choir led by Morah Zahava Fried and Cantor Arlene Frank will be on most Sundays after Religious School at 11:30 am. Please RSVP using the Junior Choir contact Form. Junior Choir performances will take place at both synagogues. The next session is on Sunday, December 7th, 2025 at 11:30 am.

The Buffalo Corner Reading Series will return on Thursday, December 18, 2025 at 7:00 pm. Join us as we celebrate Hannukah and build community through Poetry Readings organized by Liz Mariani featuring poetry from Liz Mariani, Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein, vonetta t. rhodes and Ekaete Bailey. This event will include a Hanukkah Candle Lighting and a Wine and Cheese Reception. Please RSVP to Joanne at Joanne Marquisee at joanne.marquisee@gmail.com.

The Toy Story 8 Nights of Hanukkah Celebration will be on Friday, December 19th at 7:00 pm. Join us for complimentary pizza at 6:00 pm, a special Hanukkah Service featuring Cantor Frank's Ukulele Band at 7:00 pm, and an Oneg Shabbat with a Latke Bar to follow. Please RSVP to Joanne at joanne.marquisee@gmail.com. We will also celebrate Consecration of our new CSS Religious School students.

The JFS Blessing Circle will take place on the third Tuesday of each month, with the first session being on Tuesday, January 20th. Join in conversation about different Jewish values. Some sessions will incorporate guided skill building led by a counselor. You can attend all or some of the group meetings. Please RSVP to Yonina Foster at yfoster@jfswny.org. It will take place at the JCC Benderson Building.

The CSS Confirmation Class Informational Meeting will be on Sunday, December 7th at 11:30 am. We would like to invite all CSS 8th-12th graders and their families to the Confirmation Class Informational Meeting. Please RSVP to Rabbi Alex Lazarus-Klein at lazarusklein@yahoo.com.

Our Mission Statement, as a congregation, is to be a welcoming community and to enhance all aspects of Jewish life.

The Board of Trustees of Congregation Shir Shalom
COMMITMENT STATEMENT

We, the Board of Trustees, pledge to unite and to enrich the lives of our congregation.

We will proceed in our commitment to Congregation Shir Shalom, to create an inclusive and open environment for the entire congregation.

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Cantor-Arlene Frank
Executive Director-Joanne Marquisee
Religious School Director-Rabbi Einav Symons
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Prayer for those who lead our congregation

O God, this congregation has honored us with the task of leading them, and of serving You with them.
May we strive to be fit for this sacred task.
May we lead well and may we serve well.
May we hear the quiet as well as the active voices, and may we heed the call and follow the paths of what we, after honest searching, feel to be the right things to do.
May we listen to each other, and may we listen to You, as all of us together make this synagogue a *kehillah kedusha*, a Holy place.

Congregation Shir Shalom is Affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism and Reconstructing Judaism.