



Gates of Peace



**Congregation
Sha'are Shalom
2026
Directory**

Public Edition

In Loving Memory of
Rabbi Randy Schoch



**Thank you for sharing your
knowledge and love of Torah**

CONGREGATION SHA'ARE SHALOM DIRECTORY 2026



Gates of Peace

*A Reform Congregation Affiliated with the
Union for Reform Judaism*

**18 Henry Ford Circle
Waldorf, MD 20602-2787**

(301) 645-4606

shareshalom@gmail.com

***<http://shareshalomsmomd.org>
<https://www.facebook.com/shalomwaldorf>***

Grammy's Glass Garden



Stepping Stone

Stained Glass Windows
Home Décor
Jackie Schoch
301-437-5045



Stars of David

Grammy's Glass Garden is on FB
grammysglassgarden@gmail.com



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Flower



Hanukah
Party,
December
2025

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Greetings from the Congregation's President

Dear CSS Family,

I would like to take this opportunity to express my gratitude for the strength, generosity, and spirit of our synagogue.

As I reflect on this past year, I realize that it was defined by connection. We had meaningful and uplifting turnouts across our High Holidays, special events, and Shabbat dinners (most notably the spaghetti and lasagna dinners). Our shul was filled with prayer as well as great conversation, the laughter of so many, and the warmth that comes from gathering as a community. Regardless of the event, it is and always has been YOU and your presence that has made our synagogue lively and welcoming.

At the heart of this vitality is something even deeper: philanthropy.

A synagogue does not thrive on membership alone. It thrives on commitment, on individuals and families who believe in sustaining Jewish life, education, tradition, and community for the next generation.

This year, we were blessed with several significant donations that strengthened our foundation in meaningful ways. These generous contributions allowed us to maintain our programming, enhance our offerings, and continue serving our congregation. We also successfully secured grants that substantially improved our security infrastructure and security details which ensured that our sacred space remains both welcoming and protected. In a time when security is not optional but essential, this support was invaluable.

Philanthropy is not only about large gifts. It is about participation. It is about every member who contributes what they can be it financially, through volunteerism, leadership, and by your presence. Every act of giving affirms that this synagogue matters.

The work ahead remains important. Jewish continuity requires intention. Community requires investment. And philanthropy remains the engine that allows us to dream bigger, plan smarter, and serve more meaningfully.

As we enter the coming year, I invite each of us to consider how we can deepen our involvement through attendance, volunteerism, leadership, or financial support. Every gift, every effort, every act of commitment makes a difference.

Thank you for believing in this community.

Thank you for showing up.

Thank you for giving.

Together, we are strengthening a legacy.

Jake Lindsay
President

Significant Events in the History of Sha'are Shalom

- 1990 Established bimonthly religious services and Sunday School
- 1991 Observed all major holidays, excluding the High Holy Days services
- 1992 Conducted our first High Holy Days services
- 1994 Purchased and dedicated our own Torah
- 1995 Affiliated with the Union for Reform Judaism (URJ)
- 1996 Conducted our first community Seder
- 2007 Purchased land in Waldorf for our synagogue building
- 2009 Synagogue completed with occupation and dedication of building on April 4th



Cleaning the Torah, August 2025.

Congregation Contact People

Officers

President.....	Jacob Lindsay
Vice President	Marshall Jones
Treasurer	Jackie Schoch
Secretary	Suzanne Darby
Financial Secretary.....	Stuart Richman

Committee Chairs/Coordinators

Religious School Principal.....	Liz Mildenstein
Religious School Activities Director.....	Melissa Gilpin
Women's Group	Suzanne Darby
Men's Group	Mark Holt
Golden Cards	Jackie Schoch
Yahrzeit/Mitzvah Boards	Suzanne Darby
Web Maven	Abby Richman
Saturday Service Coordinator.....	Pat Myers
Membership.....	Maryiha Lindsay
Facilities and Security.....	Rich Gilpin
Librarian and Newsletter.....	Joselle Gilpin
Community Engagement.....	Liz Mildenstein

Email address: shareshalom@gmail.com

About the Congregation

The Beginning

Congregation Sha'are Shalom (Gates of Peace) was founded in 1990 as an independent organization to meet the religious and educational needs of a growing and diverse Jewish population in Charles, Calvert, Saint Mary's, and southern Prince George's counties. The organization was also to provide a way to share our cultural and social identity.

With Charles County being the focal point for the significant growth in this area, the Congregation established its presence in Waldorf.

Our Growth

One person's idea to provide a Jewish presence in southern Maryland has evolved into a Reform Congregation, providing a full range of religious and social events for our membership and the Jewish population in the community at large:

- Shabbat Services: second Saturday and fourth Friday of each month
- Religious School: Sunday mornings during the school year
- Confirmation Class
- Adult Education
- Holiday Observances
- Social Events

Our Objective

To provide the opportunity for all Jewish families to perpetuate their heritage and share a sense of belonging. We welcome all people who share our interests.



Religious school students learn how to properly blow their 3-D printed shofars.

Religious School

The Sha'are Shalom Religious School was established to teach the young people of the congregation about Jewish traditions, holidays, culture and values, as well as Hebrew for religious services. It is a place where Jewish children can gather with others with similar backgrounds. This is particularly important in an area such as Southern Maryland where Jews are widely dispersed.

Classes are currently available for students ages 3 through 13. Parent volunteers conduct classes. Materials are tailored based on interests and needs of each age group and vary depending on the number of registrants.



Weekly Newsletter

The Sha'are Shalom Weekly is distributed by email every week to inform congregation members and the Southern Maryland Jewish community about Sha'are Shalom services, events, announcements, yahrzeits, birthdays, anniversaries, and other items of interest. The newsletter is also posted on the home page of the Sha'are Shalom web site, shaareshalom-sm.org. To place articles in the newsletter and get on the distribution list, contact Editor Joselle Gilpin at joselle_gilpin@yahoo.com.



Hot Shabbat, June 2025

About Our Rabbis

Rabbi Gail Fisher



Gail Fisher, head rabbi at Congregation Sha'are Shalom, was a CPA who specialized in taxes and business advising. Upon retirement, she fulfilled a lifelong dream by attending rabbinic school at the Jewish Spiritual Leaders Institute, a program for Jewish professionals leading to rabbinic ordination, which took place in June 2018. She finds dealing with human concerns and spiritual matters vastly more fulfilling than putting little numbers into little boxes.

When not leading Sha'are Shalom services and other programming, she might be volunteering at a retirement community or teaching classes on various Jewish topics. And most of the spare moments in between these activities are filled with studying—

taking classes or reading on her own. This is not how she envisioned retirement, but she is thriving on doing what she believes in so profoundly.

Gail is the proud mother of two children (both attorneys) and grandmother of five exceptionally beautiful and brilliant children. Her pleasures include needlework, music, and being out in nature.

Rabbi Jasha Levenson

Jasha Levenson became Rabbi of Congregation Sha'are Shalom in 2020, after many years as a volunteer service leader, Hebrew school teacher, and wedding, funeral, and life cycle officiant. He was ordained in June 2020 by the Jewish Spiritual Leaders Institute. After moving to the Baltimore area, he became associate rabbi in 2025.

Jasha is a full-time web developer and federal contractor and also acts as CEO and managing partner of Hullo Pillow, an all natural pillow company. When he's not working or performing rabbinical duties, Jasha enjoys spending time outdoors with his family and making music in his home studio.

Jasha's goal is to enlighten others to the wonders of nature that surround us, to embrace our traditions with respect to those who observe other traditions, and learn to raise each other up as a global community while working within our own community.



Rabbi Emeritus Arnold Saltzman

Rabbi Arnold Saltzman was the Rabbi of Sha'are Shalom from 2011-2016. In recognition of his years of service and the special relationship he built with the congregation, he was named Rabbi Emeritus of Sha'are Shalom in August 2016.

He is a well-known composer of Jewish-themed works. His most recent opera, "Geniza: Hidden Fragments," centers on the discovery of historic documents that revealed details about Medieval Jewish life in Egypt.



Congregation Library

Sha'are Shalom has a vibrant library, located adjacent to the lobby foyer. Books that are available include volumes on:

- Jewish Practices
- Jewish Holidays
- Jewish History
- Important Historical Figures
- Jewish Heritage
- Israel – history, current events, photos, historical sites, living etc.
- Jewish Life in the USA, Israel, and around the world
- Jewish Women
- Philosophy
- Ethics
- Talmud, Torah, Haftorah, and Commentaries
- Comparative Religions
- Raising a Jewish Child/ Children's Books
- The Holocaust
- Fiction with Jewish content and/or by Jewish authors

For more information, contact Congregation Librarian Joselle Gilpin, (301) 752-4229, joselle_gilpin@yahoo.com.



Torah Study

Congregation Sha'are Shalom holds regular Torah Study sessions that are open to all adult members or prospective members (older than b'nai mitzvah age).

Each hour-long meeting focuses on a section of the Torah or other books of the Hebrew Bible. Recent study topics have included the books of Kings I and II, Isaiah, and Job.

A study guide specially prepared for each session includes a summary of the text and insightful discussion questions. Samples of some recent questions include:

- In what ways were the social issues of Judah 2,500 years ago the same as modern society?
- If Job is questioning his very existence, is he also questioning God's purpose?
- God repeatedly punishes and forgives the people of Israel and Judah. What does this tell us about God?

There are no wrong opinions! The lively discussions focus on the actions and motivations of the biblical characters and possible lessons for people in the modern world.

Torah Study sessions are held on Zoom one or two Saturday mornings per month. Participants are welcome to join whenever they are available, whether it's almost every time or just occasionally. Check the Sha'are Shalom newsletter and calendar for exact days.

BLINTZ SOUFFLE

12 frozen blintzes (no need to thaw)

16 oz. sour cream

6 eggs

1/4 c. sugar

1 stick butter, melted

Line greased 2 1/2-qt casserole dish with blintzes. Combine remaining ingredients and pour over. Refrigerate overnight. Bake 350F for 1 1/2 - 2 hours till nicely browned.

I add vanilla and orange extracts and orange zest. You can also top with cinnamon/sugar and you could bake it in a 13"x9" (glass) pan. I always use plain yogurt instead of sour cream. You can halve the recipe if you wish and bake in a 1 1/2-qt casserole dish.

Rabbi Gail Fisher

Member, Washington Board of Rabbis

Union of Jewish Universalist Communities

www.RabbiGail.com





Community Seder, April 2025

Kasha Varnishkes

Jewish comfort food with toasty buckwheat and bow-tie noodles, onions, mushrooms, and herbs.

Ingredients

3 tablespoon kosher salt, divided, plus more as needed

1 1/4 cup kasha (roasted buckwheat groats)

7 tablespoons extra-virgin olive oil (or schmaltz or butter), divided, plus more as needed

3 large yellow onions, chopped (about 6 cups)

2 pinch freshly ground black pepper, plus more to taste

10 ounce baby bella mushrooms, thickly sliced (about 3½ cups)

1/2 pound bow-tie noodles (farfalle)

2 large garlic cloves, finely chopped or micro-planed

3/4 cup chopped flat-leaf parsley

1/4 cup chopped chives



Directions

1. Heat the oven to 375° F.
2. Set a large pot of water over high heat. Add 1½ tablespoons salt, plus more to taste, until it's salty. Bring to a boil. Add the kasha and establish a steady boil. Stir occasionally for 10-15 min, until the kasha is tender, not mushy. Use a slotted spoon or fine-mesh sieve to transfer the kasha to a bowl. Keep the water warm on the stove.
3. Heat a large skillet over medium heat. Add ¼ cup of the oil. When it's shimmery, add the onions; season generously with salt and a pinch of black pepper. Cook, stir, and lower heat as needed for about 40 minutes, until caramelized.
4. On a rimmed sheet pan, arrange the mushrooms. Drizzle with the remaining 3 tablespoons of the oil; season with salt & a pinch of pepper. Toss to combine. Roast for about 30 minutes until deeply browned.
5. Return the pot of water to a boil. When the onions and mushrooms are almost done, add the pasta to the water. Cook, stirring occasionally, for about 8 minutes, until al dente. Transfer the pasta to the skillet with the onions, reserving the pasta water.
6. Add mushrooms, kasha, & garlic to the skillet and toss to combine. Add a big splash of pasta water to loosen up everything. Add a generous pour of oil. Season with salt & pepper. Add most of the herbs and toss to combine. Sprinkle the remaining herbs on top.

From Paul and Elaine McVinney



Kugel a la Dorothy Engel

*½ lbs. wide egg noodles
16 oz cottage cheese
8 oz sour cream
1 stick of butter, melted*

*Cook noodles, drain but do not rinse.
Mix all the ingredients above together and put into casserole
dish.*

*Beat together:
2 cups milk
¾ cup sugar
1 tsp. Vanilla
3 eggs
Raisins *
* optional*

*Pour liquid over noodle mixture,
Cook for 1½ hours at 375 degrees.*

*Enjoy – from the Darby Family. Suzanne, Don,
Libby, Daniel, Nathan, Evelyn, and Frank*

MARYLAND CHORAL SOCIETY

A COMMUNITY ENSEMBLE PRESENTING
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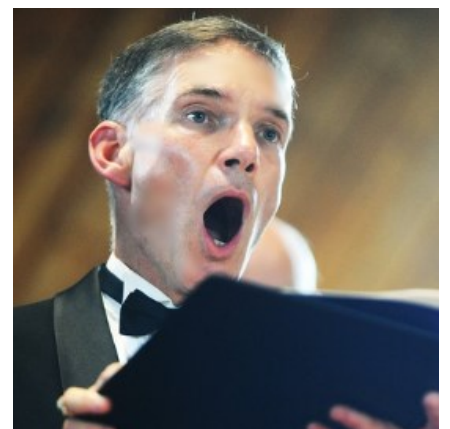
WASHINGTON WOMEN

SUNDAY, MAY 3, 2026
4PM

MOUNT CALVARY CATHOLIC CHURCH
6700 MARLBORO PIKE
FORESTVILLE, MD 20747

At this crucial juncture in our nation's history, join us as we mark the 250th anniversary of the United States with works from a diverse variety of American composers that celebrate the ideals we ceaselessly strive to realize. Opening with Randall Thompson's famed call for just leadership in *The Last Words of David*, the words of sixteen remarkable women from U.S. history are set to music, ranging from Abigail Adams to Eleanor Roosevelt to Kamala Harris.

Maryland Choral Society members consist of auditioned and dedicated volunteer choral music enthusiasts from the Washington, DC, metropolitan area. We actively seek out experienced choral musicians through the year.



The Maryland Choral Society rehearses on Monday evenings from 7:15 to 9:30 p.m. at Bethany Christian Church, 7128 Allentown Road, Fort Washington, MD 2074. For more information, contact Sha'are Shalom member Pat Myers at myerspat@gmail.com, or click "Join MCS" at

marylandchoralsociety.org

*Thank you, Madelene
Weinberger, for your many years
of friendship and service to
Congregation Sha'are Shalom!*



Enjoying New Orleans



Baking hamentaschen

*Although you've now moved to New Orleans,
you'll always be remembered here in Maryland.*



**Landscaping day,
spring 2025**

About Our Building

Congregation Sha'are Shalom dedicated its building at 18 Henry Ford Circle in Waldorf on April 4, 2009. The dedication ceremony was the culmination of years of fundraising, planning, and hard work, especially by former Congregation President Lee Weinberger.

Sha'are Shalom's synagogue building hosts the congregation's religious services, religious school, holiday celebrations, bar and bat mitzvahs, other life events, and social activities. It has a multipurpose room with a full-service kitchen and sanctuary that can be separated by a moveable wall. There are three separate classrooms, as well as a library and office. The landscaped grounds around the building, including a playground, are used for picnics and other outdoor events.

When the building is not being used for congregation activities, members may reserve it for their own events, such as birthday parties, weddings, and other celebrations. Congregation members wishing to reserve the building should fill out the Building Use Agreement that is posted in the Member Area of the Sha'are Shalom web site, [https:// shareshalomsm.org/member-area](https://shareshalomsm.org/member-area).

Happy New Year

Congregation Sha'are Shalom

From

St. Columba Masonic Lodge #150

100 East Hawthorne Drive

LaPlata, MD 20646-4281

info@stcolumba150.org

RANDALL A. SCHOCH, PAST CHAPLAIN

Congregation Sha'are Shalom

In Memory of Randy's Family

Adolph Schoch—Father

Ruth Mikel Schoch—Mother

Joan Schoch Ronan—Sister

Jared Randall Martin—Grandson

Mary "Tommie" Koch—Cousin

Jack & Justin Koch—Cousins

In Memory of Jackie's Family

John Dries—Father

Lillie W. Pumphrey—Grandmother

May they all rest in peace.

Randy and Jackie



In Fond Memory of
ALVIN COHEN, BOB
LOCKE &
MERLE & ANNETTE WHITT

Who did so much for our synagogue

May they rest in peace

Madelene Weinberger



Men's Dinner at Szechuan Garden, May 2025

Men's Group

The Men's Group's mission is to provide opportunities for men to get to know one another by doing things together, whether social, educational, service, or spiritual. All men in the Southern Maryland Jewish Community, including non-Jewish men with Jewish spouses, are welcome to participate in Men's Group activities.

Men's Group Dinners. The Men's Group regularly meets in area restaurants for dinner to enjoy good food and fellowship.

Men's Group Shabbat Service. The fourth Friday evening in March each year is a special Shabbat service run by the Men's Group. Each year's service has a theme chosen by the group, such as Jewish politicians in American history and Jewish influence on popular music.

Hot Shabbat and Cold Shabbat. The Men's Group organizes the popular annual Hot Shabbat in June and Cold Shabbat in January, including a picnic or indoor dinner followed by a brief evening service.

Women's Group

The Women's Group is simply there to provide friendship and fun. Everyone is included, no signing up, no extra fees required! You can participate in as many or as few events as you wish. Past activities have included:

- Attending plays at the Port Tobacco Playhouse
- Friday evening Shabbat services led by the Women's Group
- Women's Dinners at local restaurants

Proposals for other activities, such as walks and bike rides, are generated by the group. All ideas are welcome!

Congregation Sha'are Shalom Is Affiliated With the Union for Reform Judaism



The Reform Jewish Movement believes there is more than one authentic way to be Jewish and that Judaism must change and adapt to the needs of the day to survive. We can unite thousands of years of tradition with modern experience to strengthen Judaism today and for generations to come.

Union for Reform Judaism

633 Third Avenue, New York, NY 10017 <https://urj.org>

Support Sha'are Shalom With a Directory Ad

The annual Sha'are Shalom Directory is not only a very useful address book that most of us keep by the telephone or computer but is also a major fundraiser for our synagogue.

Personal Ads. Placing a personal greeting in the Directory is a great way to wish everyone a happy New Year or to remember a loved one. The prices for personal ads are:

Inside front cover - \$200
Back cover - \$200
Full page (8" x 5") - \$150
Half page (4" x 5") - \$75
Quarter page (2" x 5") - \$50
1/8 page (2" x 2 ½") - \$25

Business ads. Anyone can ask local business people to place an ad in our directory, used by dozens of area families. The prices for business ads are:

Inside front cover - \$250
Back cover - \$250
Full page (8" x 5") - \$220
Half page (4" x 5") - \$120
Quarter page (2" x 5") - \$75
1/8 page (2" x 2 ½") - \$50

For the 2027 Edition: Send ad copy to Mark Holt by January 15, 2027, at 13413 Kris Ran Court, Fort Washington, MD 20744, mark.edward.holt@gmail.com. Checks should be made out to Congregation Sha'are Shalom.

Observances and Holidays 2026 (5786-5787)



Tu B'Shevat	February 1	15 Shevat
Purim	March 2-3	14 Adar
Passover	April 1-9	15-22 Nisan
Yom HaShoah	April 13	27 Nisan
Yom Ha'Atzmaut	April 21	3 Iyar
Lag B'Omer	May 4	18 Iyar
Shavuot	May 21-23	6-7 Sivan
Tisha B'Av	July 22-23	9 Av
Rosh Hashanah	September 11-13	1-2 Tishrei
Yom Kippur	September 20	10 Tishrei
Sukkot	Sept 25-Oct 2	15-21 Tishrei
Shemini Atzeret	October 2	22 Tishrei
Simchat Torah	October 3	23 Tishrei
Hanukah	Dec 4-Dec 12	25 Kislev-2 Tevet

Holidays begin at sundown. For more information, visit <https://www.hebcal.com/holidays/>

Congregation events are added throughout the year. Visit our website for up-to-date information: shareshalomsm.org