



## **SERVICES**

Shabbat Evening Services - Friday,  
7:30 p.m., July 3, 10, 17, 24, and 31

Shabbat Morning Services - Saturday,  
10:00 a.m., July 4 and 18

Shabbat Mincha Service - Bar Mitzvah of  
Ben Peikes-Wertheimer, Saturday, July 18,  
4:00 p.m., at Bnai Shalom

Tallis & T'fillin Thursday Minyan,  
8:00 a.m., July 2, 9, 16, 23 and 30

## **UPCOMING MEETINGS**

Board Meeting - Thursday, July 9, at 7:00 p.m.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

Book Club - Sunday, July 12, at  
10:30 a.m. (see page 6 for details)

Bnai Shalom Bingo - Sunday, July 12,  
at 1:00 p.m. Doors open at 12:00 p.m.  
(see page 6 for details)

Knitting Group - Wednesday, June 15,  
at 10:30 a.m. (see page 8 for details)



## **A Word From Rabbi Adrienne**

Shalom to my Bnai Shalom family!

Before I dive into my message for this month's Bulletin, I want to express my deepest thanks for the vote of confidence at our Annual Meeting. I am honored to have extended my contract with Congregation Bnai Shalom and I look forward to many more Shabbatot, holidays, life-cycle events, and community gatherings in the coming five years!

Now... Communities across the country have been commemorating the events that led to American independence for over a year, beginning on April 19, 2025, when Lexington and Concord held their annual reenactments of the first skirmishes of the Revolutionary War. And on July 4<sup>th</sup>, we will mark the signing of the Declaration of Independence, the formal beginning of our journey as a country.

In 1790, President George Washington visited the State of Rhode Island to mark its ratification of the Constitution and to promote the Bill of Rights. While there, he met with a variety of clergy, including Moses Seixas, the warden of Newport's Touro Synagogue, now the oldest surviving synagogue in North America. Following the visit, Seixas wrote to Washington, and Washington responded with his now-famous letter to the Hebrew Congregation of Newport, which you can read on page 3.

This letter from Washington was extraordinary. It elevated the commitment of the newly-formed United States to more than just tolerance of different religions. Instead, he stated that our country was founded on the principle of "liberty of conscience", the novel idea that each person has the right to choose their own religious expression... or to not choose any religious expression at all. It eloquently expressed the United States' dedication to the separation of church and state, and it has been cited in at least three Supreme Court cases involving religious liberty.

The Bill of Rights had not yet been ratified, but Washington's public letter left no doubt that the religious freedoms and protections afforded to Christian denominations would be equally extended to all Americans, including people like the Jews, whose beliefs differed from those of the majority. It unequivocally communicated that this new, young government would neither stifle nor interfere with an individual's religious beliefs, traditions or practice.

*(continued on page 3)*