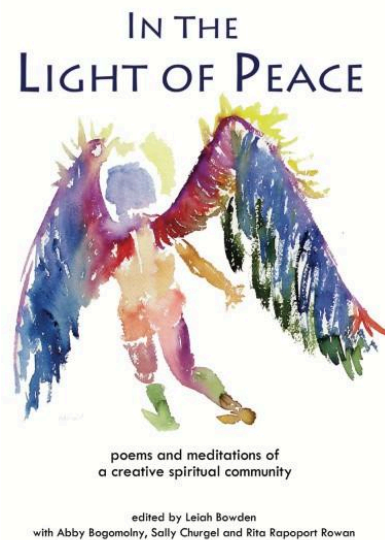
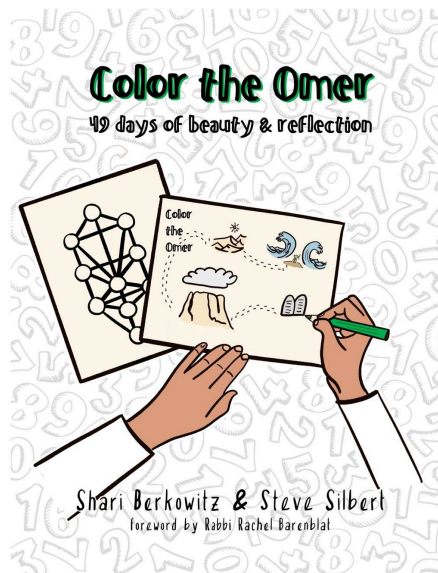


2021 Annual Report of Bayit: Building Jewish



two of this year's publications

Blueprint: Table of Contents

1. Bayit's Mission and Vision
2. Year At A Glance
3. 2021 Building Work
 - a. Bayit Publishing
 - b. Classes
 - c. Liturgical Arts Working Group
 - d. Spiritual Innovation Tools
4. Donors
5. About Us

Bayit's Mission and Vision (Revised This Year)

Mission Statement:

Bayit is building a soulful, inclusive and meaningful Jewish life for all ages and stages. Our visionary teams of clergy, liturgists, artists, educators and other thought leaders across and beyond denominational life develop, test, refine and distribute tools for a Jewish future always under construction.

Vision Statement:

From Bayit's building vision emerge keystone principles for building Jewish life:

- *Building is for everyone.* A Judaism in which “all” can be builders must uplift the leadership and innovation of all ages, all genders and sexual orientations, all races and ethnicities, and visionaries with all kinds of inner wiring.
- *Building is for all streams of Jewish life.* A Judaism of wisdom and completeness must be passionately pluralist, flowing with all of the ever-changing streams of Jewish life, in every form that treasures diversity and wise innovation rooted in the deep soil of Jewish values, times and practices.

- *Building is for lived experience.* A practical Judaism puts experience first, bringing to life ancient designs (text, values, prayer, social justice, rhythms) with modern tools, structures and systems.
- *Building is constantly in progress.* A Judaism that “increases” wisdom and completeness is always “under construction,” with tools that wisely and playfully “remix” of tradition with innovation, what’s been and what’s next.
- *Building needs both grounding and height.* A Judaism of “builders,” like any physical structure, needs designs that serve its purposes, strong and stable grounding, and height to rise above foundations – all balanced to stand strong and gently move with shifting ground.
- *Building needs the right tools for the right jobs.* Wise building uses design tools of research and development – to courageously try, measure, tweak and try again, mindful of both subjective experience and best practices, historical trends and modern contexts.
- *Building must be real.* A Judaism of real “wisdom” and “completeness” must be real both inwardly and outwardly, courageously truthful and responsive about what inspires and what doesn’t.

What Makes Bayit Unique:

Bayit fulfills this principled vision at the dynamic intersection of three overlapping centers of creative vitality:

- *Bayit is an Artist Collective.* Bayit brings together diverse creatives of liturgy, ritual, visual art, music and thought leadership.
- *Bayit is a Vibrant Collaborative Community.* Bayit curates participants who are diverse in denomination, demography and perspective, whose strengths and differences prime the pump of creativity and excellence.
- *Bayit is an Innovation Incubator.* Bayit uses modern design thinking tools – developed in system theory, leadership development and business circles – to bring creativity to life.

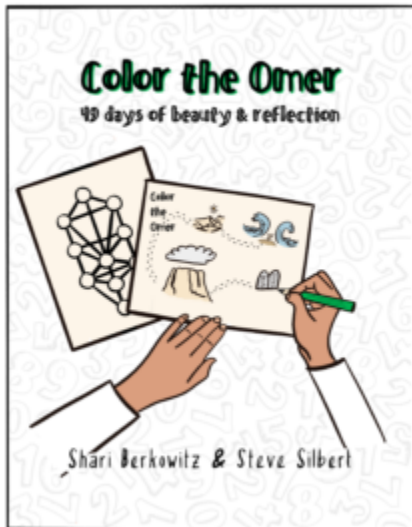
Year At A Glance

In 2021, we...

- Released a contemplative coloring book, the brainchild of Sheri Berkowitz / illustrated by Steve Silbert, called *Color the Omer*
- Released an anthology of poetry and artwork by members of congregation Ner Shalom, *In the Light of Peace*
- Launched a multi-faith social justice course for clergy, “God who Forms their Hearts As One,” co-taught by a minister and a rabbi
- Brought forward new collaborative liturgical arts offerings, including:
 - *Rolling Darkness into Light: Chanukah 5782*
 - *Gates, Open and Closing: Days of Awe 5782*
 - *Rosh Hodesh Elul: New Year of the Animals*
 - *Tisha b’Av: Our Mourning Year*
 - *Together, Becoming: Shavuot*
 - *Yearning for Our Plague to End: Lag Ba’Omer 5781 / 2021*
 - *Approaching Our Second Covid Seder*
 - *The Lot of One Year: Liturgy, Poetry, and Art for Purim 2021*
 - *Connections: Liturgy, Poetry, and Art for Tu biShvat*
- Curated and shared new poems, prayers, practices, and artwork at Builders Blog

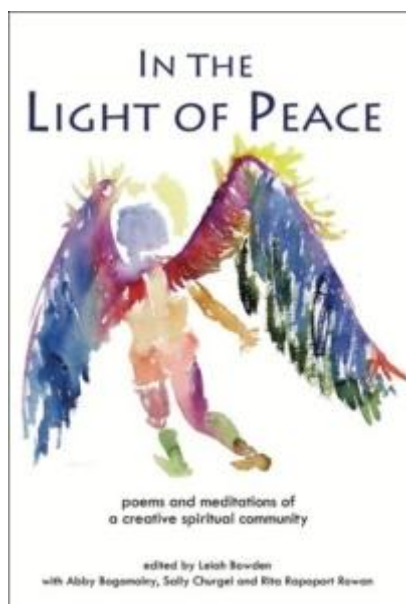
Bayit Publishing

In 2021 we released two books:



Color the Omer

Color the Omer is a tool for counting the Omer with mindfulness and beauty. These illustrations offer a meditative focus and an artistic activity for each day of the journey between Pesach and Shavuot, along with short teachings designed to spark your own internal revelation as you color. A collaboration between Dr. Shari Salzhauer Berkowitz and Bayit Builder Steve Silbert. [Available for \\$13.](#)



In the Light of Peace

In the Light of Peace is a volume of curated liturgical poetry in partnership with congregation [Ner Shalom](#), designed for use in liberal Jewish settings across and beyond the denominations. Edited by Leah Bowden with co-editors Rita Rowan, Sally Churgel, and Abby Bogomolny, these poems speak of death and dying, revelation, gratitude, loneliness, love, resentment and forgiveness — and more. [Available for \\$18.](#)

Classes

In 2021 Rabbi Alana Suskin and Reverend Cornell Jenkins taught a multi-faith social justice course for clergy titled **God Who Forms Their Hearts As One.**



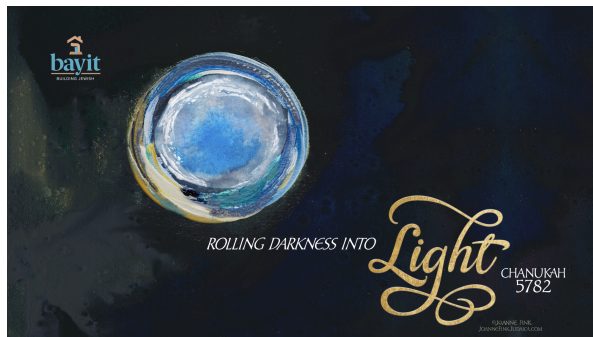
A CLASS FOR BLACK CHRISTIAN CLERGY AND FOR JEWISH CLERGY OF ALL RACES

This six part series invites us to engage in a process of self-reflection, historical understanding, and dialogue to investigate the role of race among Jews and Blacks in America, and to help us move beyond platitudes to reconciliation. Each 90-minute session uses pedagogical techniques to explore biases and utilizes Jewish and Christian texts to build a common understanding and create a path forward. Each session also introduces tools for participants to bring these lessons back to their own communities.

The first session is a text-based introduction to themes of human unity and disunity, and how those texts were historically used and abused. In the second session, we offer a basic introduction to structural racism, and discuss how systems of oppression work and how they trap well-meaning individuals into serving their ends. The third and fourth sessions focus on specific “-isms”, how the Black and Jewish communities have gone astray in their relationships with one another, and how we can get back on the path of unity. Session five explores what race is and is not, and how the Black and Jewish communities understand themselves and one another. The final session asks, “How is your life going to change when these systems change?” and what can your role be in making that happen. We discuss Jewish and Christian texts dealing with deconstruction and reconstruction.

Liturgical Arts Working Group

Rolling Darkness Into Light: Chanukah 5782



The pandemic has become endemic, and our planet is imperiled. Chanukah comes not to distract us from these realities, but to offer a path through them. Chanukah is about what fuels us even when we feel empty (or maybe especially then). Our liturgy speaks of God Who rolls light out of darkness and darkness out of light. May these prayers, poems, and artworks sustain us as we find the holiness both in today's

darkness and in our turn toward increasing light.

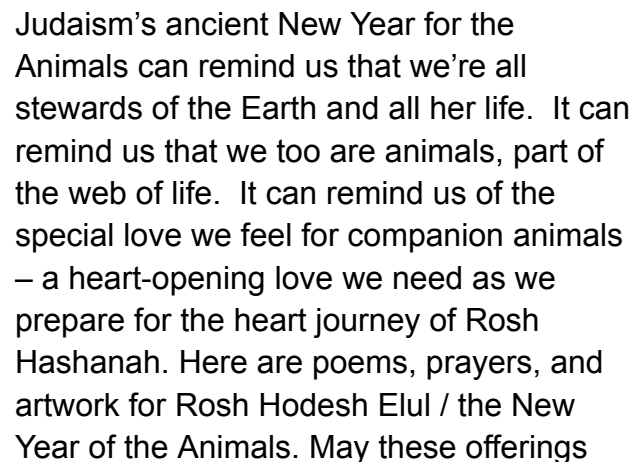
Available both as a printable PDF and as illuminated google slides suitable for screensharing. Featuring work by Trisha Arlin, R. Rachel Barenblat, R. Dara Lithwick, Joanne Fink, R. David Evan Markus, R. Sonja K. Pilz PhD, and R. David Zaslow. Read excerpts, preview the slides, and download here: [Darkness Into Light](#).

Gates, Open and Closing

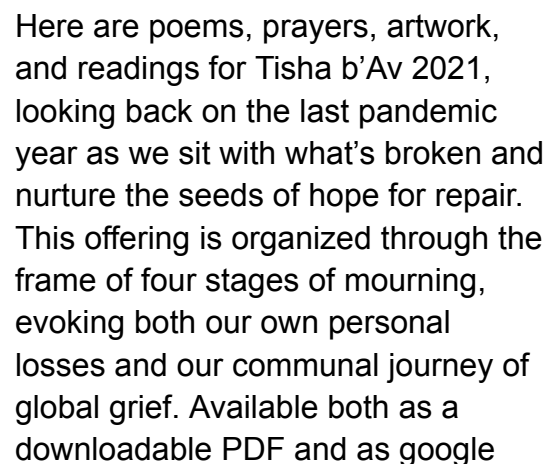


These offerings are bookends for the Days of Awe. Here are poems, prayers, and artworks for Selichot and for Ne'ilah, the near and far thresholds of this holy season. May they help these holidays lift our spirits and open our hearts. And may the new year bring blessing not only to us but to the whole aching world. Available both as a downloadable PDF and as google slides suitable for screenshare. Featuring work

by Trisha Arlin, R. Rachel Barenblat, Joanne Fink, R. David Evan Markus, R. Sonja K. Pilz PhD, and Steve Silbert. Read excerpts and download here: [Gates, Open and Closing \(Selichot and Ne'ilah 5782\)](#)



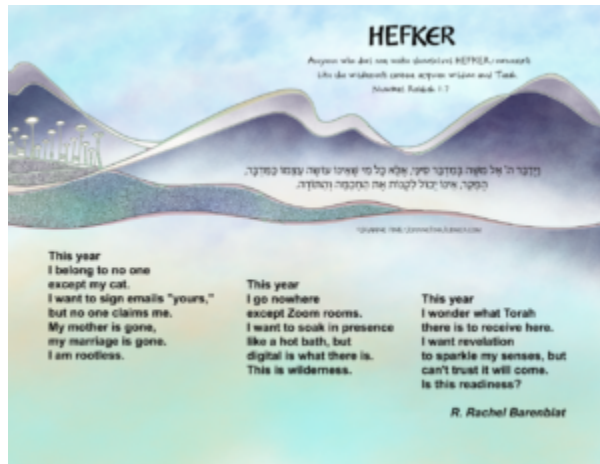
Tisha b'Av 5781: Our Mourning Year



8

[Together, Becoming: Shavuot 5781 / 2021](#)

New from Bayit's Liturgical Arts Working Group comes this collaborative compilation of liturgy, poetry and art for this second pandemic Shavuot.



Exploring themes of standing together at Sinai (even when we're apart), the harvest of first fruits, the mountain where we journey and the mountain over our heads, being "ownerless" in the wilderness, and more, these poems and prayers and illustrations are meant for personal and communal use. We hope they speak to you and open you more wholly to this year's revelation.

Read excerpts and download here:

[Together, Becoming: Shavuot 2021.](#)

[Yearning For Our Plague to End: Lag Ba'Omer 5781 / 2021](#)

New from Bayit's Liturgical Arts Working Group comes this collaborative compilation of poetry and art for Lag Ba'Omer.



The 33rd day of the Omer is understood in Jewish tradition as the final day of a plague afflicting Rabbi Akiva's students. What meaning can we find in that teaching this year, as COVID-19 continues to rage worldwide even as vaccinations in some of our nations crest toward safety? Here are poems, reading, and artwork offering some answers to that question.

Read excerpts and download here: [Yearning For Our Plague to End: Lag Ba'Omer 2021.](#)

[Approaching Our Second COVID Seder](#)

Poetry, liturgy, and artwork for this second pandemic Pesach. This collaborative collection is available in two formats: as a downloadable PDF (suitable for printing to accompany a printed haggadah), and as a set of google slides (suitable for screenshare for Zoom or other online / streamed sedarim.) Here too are a handful of pieces to mark the seventh day of the festival, when tradition says we took the plunge and crossed the sea.



What does it mean to approach the season of our liberation when so many of us feel we are still in Mitzrayim / in the Narrow Place of pandemic, economic uncertainty, and global grieving? What do we carry with us on the journey? How will this seder be different from all other seders, even the first pandemic seder we celebrated a year ago? What words, images, practices, and prayers can help us connect with liberation in this season?

Read excerpts and download here: [Approaching Our Second Covid Seder](#).

[The Lot of One Year – Liturgy, Poetry, and Art for Purim 2021](#)

New from Bayit's Liturgical Arts Working Group comes a collection of poems, prayers, and artwork for this pandemic Purim. Here are meditations on (the) last Purim, and on our many-layered losses; poems on our world turning upside-down, on what our masks reveal, on grief and playfulness, on Esther and on Zeresh, on vengeance and its limitations; another new Al Hanisim looking back on Purim miracles that haven't yet arrived; illustrations (including a printable coloring page that can be turned into a gragger); and more.



Read excerpts and download here: [The Lot of One Year](#).

Connections – Liturgy, Poetry, and Art for Tu BiShvat



An interdisciplinary and pluralist collection of new work for Tu BiShvat, the New Year of the Trees: “TU biShvat is an invitation to focus on the natural world surrounding us—and at the same time, it makes us aware of our connectedness to each other, to the flow of time and stories, to the flow of cyclical renewal, to the spiritual worlds... This year, connection also is digital—we use a digital ecosystem to supplement a natural one...” Here are prayers and practices for solitary pandemic celebration, meditations on trees in urban settings, coloring pages for contemplative

creativity, prayers looking ahead to the year 2030, and more.

This collection was co-created by Trisha Arlin, R. Rachel Barenblat, R. Allie Fischman, R. Dara Lithwick, R. David Evan Markus, R. Sonja Keren Pilz, and Steve Silbert, and is intended for use by individuals and communities across and beyond the denominational spectrum. Read excerpts and download here: [Connections](#).

Spiritual Innovation Tools

During 2021 we shared a variety of innovation tools on Builders Blog, among them a digital hide-and-seek for Pesach, a [contemporary poetic haftarah](#), a new [digital kapparot ritual](#), and more. We also expanded our stable of writers for Builders Blog to include several rabbinical students at the Academy for Jewish Religion NY.

About Us

To learn more about who we are and how we build:

- [Bayit ethics policy](#)
- [Bayit Builder Bios](#)
- [The Bayit Board of Directors](#)
- [Bayit Sounding Board / Advisors](#)