



Welcome!

Dear Friend,

Welcome! What you will find first as you enter Shir Chadash is that we have gathered together a nice group of people. What you will find soon after is that these people are a community... in some ways almost an extended family. We care about each other. We love to celebrate the happy occasions, and when life offers hard times, we come together to lend a hand and in some cases to comfort those that grieve. We are alive and deal with all that life offers, the good and the bad.

You will also find in short order the remarkable gifts of our world-renowned witty and sensitive Rabbi Daniel Polish. Our Cantor Gail Hirschenfang has an amazing voice, and has a seemingly endless supply of energy for our school, our Bar/Bat Mitzvah kids, our choir, and of course, her own daughter. She brings a special spirituality to our services and gatherings.

We learn. We eat. We pray. We talk. We sing. And we eat some more. There are a lot of good cooks in the congregation.

In this packet you will find a set of documents that should give you a sense of who we are:

1. Our "Statement of Purpose"
2. Bios of Rabbi Polish and Cantor Hirschenfang
3. A Membership Pledge form, which explains the categories of membership
4. An autopay form for monthly payment of pledges
5. Brief descriptions of our Torah Study activities and our Congregational Choir.
6. Social action at Shir Chadash
7. A Yahrzeit form
8. Information about our website www.shir-chadash.org
9. Forms for religious school, which incorporates the principle that children learn by example. Parents come on Saturday, send kids to class and stay to learn with the Rabbi (and eat bagels), after which we have a Shabbat morning service.

We are meeting this year at the Freedom Plains Presbyterian Church, at the corner of Route 55 and Stringham Road, just west of the Taconic Parkway. This is an exciting move for us for many reasons. One of which is that we are close (just up the block) from our land. We purchased 5 acres of gorgeous wooded land on Freedom Road in the Town of LaGrange where we will build our permanent home when we are ready.

L'Shana Tovah... To a Good Year!

Michael Rothman

President
Congregation Shir Chadash



Statement of Purpose

Who are we?

We are a group of Jews embarking on a journey of innovation and renewal. We are searching for appropriate new ways to create a community, celebrate our heritage, deepen our faith, and pass on to our children the joy, the depth, and the richness that Judaism brings to our lives. Our name expresses our emotions and our aspirations: *Shir Chadash*—A New Song.

What do we believe?

As a community, we feel the need to identify the things that matter deeply to us, the principles that will inform our practices, shape our conduct, and guide our evolution. These principles, forged in the crucible of heartfelt discussion and tempered by a desire for consensus, reflect our yearning to extract from the tenets of our ancient tradition the inspiration and guidance for a modern congregational life.

- We are a congregation that embraces the three pillars of Judaism: *Torah*, study; *Avodah*, worship; and *Gemilut Chasadim*, deeds of love and kindness.
- We are a congregation that encourages the active participation of our members—in partnership with our clergy—in learning, in worship, and in personal and community endeavors.
- We are a congregation that is committed to the growth and evolution of Jewish belief and practice. Our religious life is rooted in the traditions of our ancestors and is informed by the nature of our contemporary world.
- We are a congregation that respects diversity and believes in inclusiveness. We value respectful discourse, seek consensus, and strive for fairness in our congregational activities.
- We are a congregation that is committed to *Tikkun Olam*, repairing the world, and this responsibility shapes our belief that social justice begins within our community.
- We are a congregation that affirms the importance of nourishing the hearts, souls, and minds of adults and children, through spiritual experiences, the finest possible educational opportunities, and the model of our own commitment to a Jewish life.



RABBI DANIEL POLISH

The Board of Trustees of **Congregation Shir Chadash** proudly announces the appointment of Rabbi Daniel Polish to serve as our rabbi.

Rabbi Polish most recently served as the Director of the Joint Commission on Social Action of the UAHC. He was born in Ithaca, New York, and raised and schooled in Evanston, Illinois. He received his B.A. in Philosophy from Northwestern University and attended Hebrew Union College in Cincinnati, Ohio where he was ordained in 1967, receiving his B.H.L and M.A.H.L. degrees. He earned his Ph.D. in History of Religion from Harvard University in 1973.

From 1973 to 1977, Rabbi Polish was the Director of Education for Inter/Met, an interfaith, interracial program for training clergy in Washington, DC.

From 1977 to 1981, Rabbi Polish served as Associate Executive Vice President and Director of the Washington Office of the Synagogue Council of America, the umbrella agency for the Reform, Conservative and Orthodox movements in the United States. In that capacity, he helped develop policy on a number of issues critical to the Jewish community.

Rabbi Polish has taught at Harvard, Tufts University and the University of Maryland. While in Los Angeles he taught at Occidental College and at the Los Angeles School of the Hebrew Union College.

He has served on the Executive Board of the Central Conference of American Rabbis and on the Editorial Board of its Journal. The Rabbi has published numerous articles in journals of Jewish and general interest and his reviews appear regularly in the Journal of Ecumenical Studies. His editorial, "A Painful Legacy: Jews and Catholics Struggle to Understand Edith Stein and Auschwitz" which appeared in Ecumenical Trends, was chosen as one of the best editorials in a Catholic publication by the Catholic Press Association. Rabbi Polish's most recent book, Bringing The Psalms to Life, was published last year and he is working on a second volume.

Rabbi Polish has served as a congregational rabbi at Temple Israel in Los Angeles, Temple Beth El in Birmingham, Michigan and at Vassar Temple in Poughkeepsie.

This year, Rabbi Polish was elected as a delegate to the World Zionist Congress and was in Israel from June 13 to June 21, 2002 serving in that capacity.

Rabbi Polish is married to Cantor Gail Hirschenfang and they live in Poughkeepsie with their six-year-old daughter, Leah. Rabbi Polish's two grown sons, Jonathan and Ari, live in suburban Chicago.

CANTOR GAIL P. HIRSCHENFANG LEADS US IN SONG, WORSHIP AND EDUCATION

Shir Chadash, which means “a new song” in Hebrew, embraces Cantor Gail P. Hirschenfang as our Cantor. Nationally recognized as one of the finest cantorial voices singing today, she is greatly admired for her seamless integration of an extensive repertoire of traditional and modern Jewish music into worship. The purity of her voice lifts the spirit. In the words of a local composer and musician, who was moved to write an original piece for her, “I could listen to her sing all day!”

Cantor Hirschenfang was invested in 1981 by the Hebrew Union College School of Sacred Music, as one of their first women cantors. She received her Master of Sacred Music degree from Hebrew Union College in 1988.

Cantor Hirschenfang, a soprano, has performed widely throughout the United States and Canada. In 1989, she was the first Reform cantor to give a concert at the newly-opened Jewish Cultural Center in Moscow. Closer to home, Cantor Hirschenfang was a finalist in the Metropolitan Opera Auditions in 1985.

Active on a national level, Cantor Hirschenfang has served on the Board of Directors of the American Conference of Cantors and served three years as national cantorial chair for the Union of American Hebrew Congregations. In 1999, she published the article, “Jewish Music—Setting the Course” in the Centennial publication of the American Conference of Cantors and Guild of Temple Musicians.

For nearly twenty-five years, Cantor Hirschenfang has served as cantor and director of *B’nai Mitzvah* preparation, for congregations in Baltimore, Buffalo and Detroit. Most recently, she served as cantor at Vassar Temple.

Cantor Hirschenfang is thrilled to be cantor, spiritual leader and educational director of *Congregation Shir Chadash*.

Cantor Hirschenfang is married to Rabbi Daniel F. Polish. They take great joy in being the proud parents of six-year-old Leah Yonina.



MEMBERSHIP 2009-2010

Dear Congregant,

We are excited about this year at Shir Chadash as we move to our new temporary location, the Freedom Plains Presbyterian Church in the Town of LaGrange. Our fiscal year begins in July, and so we now ask you again for your support. We do understand that the rough economy has affected some members. **Note that our doors are open to all, regardless of financial circumstances!** This economy does make it even more important that if you do have the means, you help us continue the promise that is Shir Chadash. We hope that we are an important priority for you. Please do not think of this as a business transaction, but as an act of Tzedakah... and Tzedakah calls forth generosity. In “Pirkei Avot / the Wisdom of Our Fathers”, we read, “the world is sustained by three things: Torah, worship and deeds of loving-kindness.” Your act of Tzedakah to Shir Chadash helps us in our mission to sustain the world.

<i>Basic Membership – \$1,400 annually</i> <i>(or \$116.67/month)</i>	
Enhanced Levels	Reduced Levels
<i>ChaiPLUS</i> - \$2000 <i>(\$167/month)</i>	<i>2nd Temple or Part Time*</i> – \$825 (<i>\$68.75/month</i>)
<i>Simcha</i> - \$3000 (<i>\$250/month</i>)	<i>Family with limited means**</i> - \$735 (<i>\$61.25/month</i>)
<i>Sustainer</i> - \$4000 (<i>\$333/month</i>)	<i>Single with limited means**</i> - \$380 (<i>\$31.67/month</i>)
<i>Builder</i> - \$5000 (<i>\$417/month</i>)	<i>Student or military</i> – Free

**The “2nd Temple or Part Time” category is for members who either belong to a synagogue in addition to Shir Chadash, or are only part time residents of Dutchess County.*

*** Note that limited means levels are **only for those** with financial hardship. If a family has the means, we expect their commitment will be at the level of at least the basic membership.*

PLEASE CONSIDER using our convenient auto-pay option. Each month we will deduct one twelfth of your annual pledge from the checking account you designate. If you are starting auto-pay in August, we will deduct **one eleventh** each month. This saves both you and Shir Chadash time and postage. Just send a voided check and the enclosed auto-pay form to our treasurer. If we already have your voided check, you need not send another.

ANOTHER way to support Shir Chadash is through donation of stock. It’s easy to do. If you donate appreciated stock, you earn a tax deduction on the full amount, plus avoid having to pay tax on any capital gains! If you have appreciated stock, it can be an attractive way to pay your annual dues.

ALSO, for the first time this year we are able to offer members the option of paying via **VISA** or **MASTERCARD**. If you would like to pay via credit card, please contact our Treasurer, Victor Feit at (845) 463-2654 for more information.

PLEASE RETURN THIS PAGE IN THE ENCLOSED ENVELOPE!

In deciding what your annual pledge will be, please consider renewing your total support from last year of _____, or even possibly increasing it.

Dues checks should be made out to “Shir Chadash” and sent to the address below. Remember that your dues are tax-deductible. Payments are due on the 15th of the month.

My ANNUAL PLEDGE is: _____

WILL PAY (circle one): MONTHLY QUARTERLY ANNUALLY

NAME _____

ADDRESS _____

CITY, STATE, ZIP _____

PHONE _____

AUTOPAY – CIRCLE ONE: YES NO

YOUR Signature _____

All checks and other financial correspondence should be addressed to our Treasurer, Victor Feit.

Victor Feit
83 King George Drive,
Poughkeepsie, NY 12603.
Phone: (845) 463-2654

Thank you for your time and together we are looking forward to a wonderful and joyful year at Shir Chadash.

With kind regards,

Michael Rothman
President

Congregation Shir Chadash

Automated Monthly Dues Payments

Authorization Agreement

I hereby authorize **Congregation Shir Chadash** to initiate automatic payments in the amount of \$_____ from my account at the financial institution named below. I also authorize **Congregation Shir Chadash** to make deposits into this account in the event that an entry is made in error.

This agreement will remain in effect from _____ till _____

Account Information

Name of Financial Institution: _____

Routing Number: _____

Account Number: _____

Checking

Savings

Signature

Authorized Signature (Primary): _____ Date: _____

Authorized Signature (Joint): _____ Date: _____

Please attach a voided check or deposit slip and return this form.

TORAH STUDY

Torah Study is led by Rabbi Polish during the year and by members of the congregation during the summer. We explore spiritual themes or ideas, important philosophers, and holy books. In the past, we have read works by Martin Buber, have discussed Kabbalah, Pirke Avot, the later and often overlooked historical books of the Bible, and Talmud. Oh, and yeah, sometimes we even talk about the Torah.

We will be publishing a catalog for adult education for this year and distributing it during the High Holy Days.

SHIR CHADASH CONGREGATIONAL CHOIR

“Shir Chadash” means ‘a new song’. Add your voice to our singers who are delighted and inspired by the richness and diversity of Jewish music, from classic to contemporary. Our friendly, diverse choir, under the direction of Cantor Gail Hirschenfang, performs several times a year, with instrumental accompaniment, during holiday and other special services. For more information about joining our choir, call or email us.



Social Action at Shir Chadash

Social action is an important part of who we are. We have had a series of projects, large and small throughout the years, to try to help our community and our world. We have a great committee this year who will be happy to welcome you.

Below are just a few snapshots of social action throughout the years...





Yahrzeit Reminders and Observance

Memorial Anniversaries will be observed at the Friday Evening *Shabbat* Service preceding the date of the anniversary.

Memorial Anniversaries

Member's Name _____ :

Name	Relationship	Date of Death
1. _____	_____	___/___/___
2. _____	_____	___/___/___
3. _____	_____	___/___/___
4. _____	_____	___/___/___
5. _____	_____	___/___/___
6. _____	_____	___/___/___
7. _____	_____	___/___/___

Do you wish to observe these dates by:

English Calendar Hebrew Calendar

Memorial Anniversaries

Member's Name _____ :

Name	Relationship	Date of Death
1. _____	_____	___/___/___
2. _____	_____	___/___/___
3. _____	_____	___/___/___
4. _____	_____	___/___/___
5. _____	_____	___/___/___
6. _____	_____	___/___/___
7. _____	_____	___/___/___

Do you wish to observe these dates by:

English Calendar Hebrew Calendar

Check out our new website!

with

A personal video from Rabbi Polish about the meaning
of Shir Chadash

Cantor Hirschenfang in song

Up-to-date schedules, including an annual calendar

Photos of our land

Photos from recent events

Including final shots of the wheelchair ramp
that was so much work.

New member packets...
and a bit of humor.

www.shir-chadash.org

Dear Parents,

August 2009

Shir Chadash offers classes from Tots through 12th grade students. Our dynamic religious school program brings Judaism to life by engaging students in stimulating classroom activities, art, music and field trips. Family activities are also held throughout the year for parents and children to learn together through fun activities. Our volunteer teaching staff creates opportunities beyond book learning to foster a love of Judaism and a sense of community.

Religious classes are held on the 1st and 3rd Saturday of every Month (however changes may occur due to legal or religious holidays). A schedule of classes will be available for your information and planning.

The **Gan class** is for Tots through Pre-K and is led by Wendy Bill. With crafts, fun with food, and music our younger children learn the love of Judaism through their senses. Please note that the Tots program is for a child accompanied by a parent. **There is no fee for the Tots program.**

The **Aleph class** is for children from Kindergarten through Second grade and is led by Jerry Scheck. The children will learn about Holiday Traditions and Bible Stories through fun filled activities throughout the year.

The **Bet class** consists of Third and Fourth Grade Students and is led by Jodi Wolff. The students of the Bet class continue their education by building upon what they learned in the Aleph class and by adding new subjects such as ethics and the study of Israel. New students are welcome.

The **Aleph and Bet class** work closely together to ensure that the students have fun learning their Jewish heritage through interactive classes and not just book study.

The **Gimel class**, led by Cantor Gail Hirschenfang, is for students from Fifth Grade through B'nai Mitzvah. Students will have the opportunity to learn various subjects such as the Jewish lifecycle, American Jewish History and Jewish Bible Studies.

The **Daled Class** led by Mara Goldstone is a monthly literature class for Students who have completed their Gimel studies through Ninth Grade. Students will explore Jewish life through literature. The class meets monthly.

Our **Machon (High School) Program** is led by Rabbi Daniel Polish and is a seminar series specially designed for high school-aged teens. A wide variety of material and discussion will be presented that will interest and challenge this very discerning group.

Classes begin at 9:00 am sharp. Please be sure to arrive a few minutes early to allow students to obtain a light breakfast so that they can gain the most from their classroom experience.

Enclosed please find:

1. a Student Registration Form that needs to be completed and returned along with a fee for materials of \$75.00 per student. Please return a check made out to "Shir Chadash."
2. a Student Information Form. Please complete and return. And,
3. a Shir Chadash Educational Covenant. Please read, sign and have the student sign as well. It should also be returned.

Sincerely,

The Shir Chadash Education Committee

Congregation Shir Chadash Religious School Registration Form 2009-2010

Parent 1: Last Name _____ First Name _____

Work Phone _____ Cell _____ Home _____

Parent's email address: _____

Home address: _____

Parent 2: Last Name _____ First Name _____

Work Phone _____ Cell _____ Home _____

Parent's email address: _____

Home address: _____

Child(ren) reside(s) with: _____ Both Parents _____ Parent 1 _____ Parent 2

Send mail to:

Student Medical Info:

Physician _____ Phone #: _____

Dentist _____ Phone #: _____

In the event I cannot be reached in an emergency, I hereby give permission to the physician selected by Shir Chadash or its agent to hospitalize, transport secure treatment for and to order injection, anesthesia or surgery for my child(ren) as named in this registration form.

Parent Signature:

Congregation Shir Chadash
Sharing Shabbat - Student Code of Rights and Responsibilities

Our tradition teaches us that the world is built upon three things - Torah, Worship and Acts of loving-kindness. These are the principles that we incorporate into the Shir Chadash Community. Please take the time to review this code of conduct with your family as we work together to strengthen the Shir Chadash Community.

Parents, teachers and children work together to create the best possible environment for Jewish Growth. Parents, teachers and children are asked to focus on the rights and responsibilities they have in creating the congregational community. We recognize the following rights and responsibilities:

The right to feel safe and the responsibility to make sure others feel safe.

The right to be respected as an individual and the responsibility to respect others.

To participate in our school community, parents, students and teachers affirm the following:

1) I am responsible for making this a safe environment. Some of the ways I can help to create a safe environment are:

I will keep my hands, my feet and objects to myself.

I will walk and play safely both inside and outside the building.

I will be in class on time.

All of my actions will be safe for others and myself.

2) I am responsible for making sure people respect each other. Some of the ways I can help to create a respectful environment are:

I will speak kindly to others and will not say hurtful things.

I will listen when others are speaking and will expect others to listen to me.

I will wait my turn to speak and will not interrupt others.

I will do my best to make sure that nobody feels left out.

I will respect requests of my teachers and other adults in the congregation.

I will support Religious school activities and will not disrupt them.

I will treat the belongings of others with respect.

All of my actions will be respectful.

3) I am responsible for taking care of our interim home at the Freedom Plains Presbyterian Church. Some ways that I can take care of the synagogue are:

I will clean up my work area and put away materials.

I will keep books, walls and furniture free from writing and other forms of damage.

I will leave chewing gum, toys, ipods, cell phones, baseball caps and sunglasses at home.

All of my behaviors will reflect appropriate respect for our surroundings.

One of the most important parts of your education is to learn about the synagogue and our worship services; **for students in the Bet class and above, we will expect that you attend at least 10 services throughout the year.** They may be either Shabbat or festival services.

In all these ways we will help create a loving and learning community.

Student Signature

Date

Parent Signature

Date

Teacher Signature

Date