

Gotcha!

I have the privilege of coming into your home each month, on paper. However, I'm not alone. This note, this Temple Bulletin, is part of a flood of paper that comes to your home. And paper's only the smallest part. Radio and TV and Internet wash over you in an information tsunami. Regularly. To survive, you tune things out. We all tune things out. Remember when you had to use a tuning knob on a radio to tune a station in? Well we tune almost always the stations out. There's too much to handle, and what there is almost always has a "gotcha" in it.

Everybody wants a piece of us. They want our time. They want our money. But first they need to break through and get our attention. To get our attention they make an offer that seems so attractive that we can't resist. So we dive in. But most of the time we regret it because we eventually come to the "gotcha".

What's a "gotcha"?

Once upon a time every kid collected stamps. You'd open a magazine and there would be an ad for these cool triangular multicolor stamps from San Marino. All you had to do was send in 10 cents and they promised to mail you several sets stamps with different kinds of shells or trees or boats. It was amazing how quickly they came once you mailed in the dime. But when the package arrived it came with something else, a whole bunch of sets of stamps, "on approval", and they cost 25 cents per set. You had to mail them back in or you'd be charged for them. It was complicated to mail them back in and in no time at all you owed dollars. That was the gotcha. Yes, you got the triangle stamps, but there was a catch.

And so how is Shir Chadash any different? Don't we have a gotcha? We SEEM nice, but don't we really just want your money. And you know I AM always asking for money. Isn't it just another gotcha?

Well once in a while, once in a long while, there isn't a gotcha. You get to keep the triangular stamps. Maybe you don't get away with just paying a dime. You have to pay a quarter. A quarter each month. But the good stuff, the cool stamps are real and they keep coming.

We aren't just another gotcha. As hard as that may be to believe, it's true. When you join Shir Chadash the good stuff keeps coming. Yes, we do need the quarter. In fact to be a member we ask for \$3 a day, but for the three bucks you get a lot of stamps. You get a bunch of folks who, although at first don't know you, seem to care about you. You get to be part of a community that values good works and ethical behavior and education and reflection. You get to share joy and celebrate good fortune and strange holidays like Purim where people get up on stage and sing Frankie Valli songs. You get to be solemn on Yom Kippur and think about your life, while others think about theirs.

There's no gotcha. Really. Please join us. Start this Shabbat. Hey, it's FREE! ☺