

Shir Hadash Goes "Green"

In October 2015, Shir Hadash commissioned a 117,000 watt solar panel system. The solar system will reduce our carbon dioxide emission by nearly 106 tons a year, which is the equivalent of planting more than 4,200 trees each year. In the next 25 years, the energy saved will be the equivalent of reducing automobile use by over 4 million miles. The system will save Shir Hadash more than \$20,000 per year in energy costs, and will pay for itself in about seven and a half years.

Rabbi Eitan Weiner-Kaplow says, "Our Jewish tradition teaches that human beings have the obligation to protect the wonderful world that God has given us. By installing solar panels on the roof, Shir Hadash Synagogue is taking a big step in fulfilling our stewardship of creation as we reduce pollution and scale down our carbon footprint. This is a proud moment for our community."

The Synagogue was awarded a grant of \$240,000 by the Illinois Clean Energy Community Foundation (ICECF) to help fund the project.



Shir Hadash Founding Rabbi Eitan Weiner-Kaplow embraces the pillars of community, creativity, and caring to enhance the celebration of our Jewish tradition and heritage. He was ordained at the Reconstructionist Rabbinical College and holds degrees in social work from the University of Wisconsin-Madison and Middle Eastern archaeology from Rutgers University.



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Shir Hadash and Reconstructionist Judaism

For more information, visit our website at www.shir-hadash.org, email office@shir-hadash.org, or call (847) 498-8218.

What You'll Find at Shir Hadash

- Our caring Rabbi, Eitan Weiner-Kaplow, who brings meaning and music to every Shabbat service, b'nai mitzvah ceremony, lifecycle event, and religious school service.
- Our Education Director Geoffrey Prass, who oversees our religious school and is devoted to community building.
- Our creative arts program, including our Lahaka choir led by Music Director Marek Rachelski.
- Our one-day-a-week religious school, which meets on Sundays and offers a full Jewish and Hebrew program along with Israeli dance, music, drama, and art.
- An engaging teen program that includes our youth group, a "Havayah" Judaic studies program for high school students, and our "Madrichim" program engaging teens as teaching assistants in our school.
- Tikkun Olam, social action to heal the world, through annual blood drives, helping out local soup kitchens, and much more.
- Adult programming such as adult education classes and social activities, including our book group, WISH Women's club, MOSH men's club, theater outings, and more.

Shir Hadash and Reconstructionist Judaism

Sometimes we get so caught up in explaining what Reconstructionist Judaism is that we forget to tell you why Shir Hadash is the right choice for you and your family. But before we talk about how Reconstructionist Judaism is different, let's talk about how it's the same Judaism that you know and love.

In most ways, Shir Hadash will feel familiar to you. We celebrate Shabbat, the Jewish holidays, and the High Holidays with creative worship services led by Rabbi Eitan Weiner-Kaplow. Our services include many of the same prayers as a Conservative service, but with a more dynamic approach. Like a Reform synagogue, we freely incorporate musical instruments into our services, but emphasize an exploration of our Jewish spirituality through an eclectic blend of traditional and new music as well as dance, drama, and visual arts.

In our religious school, students develop a strong Jewish identity. They learn Torah, prayer, Hebrew, Jewish ethics and history, the holidays, and about the Holocaust and the State of Israel. They are well prepared to lead their bar or bat mitzvah service.

We are not a cookie cutter congregation. We follow the conventions but we are not conventional. What sets Shir Hadash apart? Our emphasis on our community as we engage in social action to make the world a better place; our creative worship services, featuring music, dance, and drama; and the way we care for each other through good times and bad. We call them the three Cs—Community, Creativity, Caring.

Another reason we stand out from the rest is that we are a Reconstructionist synagogue. Reconstructionist Judaism is a progressive movement that makes Judaism relevant to contemporary life, with an emphasis on social action, the arts, and community, while still honoring tradition. We constantly experiment with new ways of worshipping, studying, and strengthening the community to make our Jewish experience more meaningful.

Inclusive, egalitarian, democratic, welcoming of interfaith families, pluralistic, participatory, innovative, and with diverse ideas about God, Reconstructionist Judaism infuses the wisdom of traditional Judaism with modern sensibilities. You will be amazed at how great it feels to practice Judaism in a way that is meaningful and relevant to your life.

We'd love to have you join us at services or pay a visit to our religious school so you can see for yourself why Shir Hadash is the right choice for you and your family.

