

About Reconstructing Judaism

Reconstructionists approach Judaism with deep consideration of the past and a passion to relate it to the present. In a rapidly changing world, Reconstructionist communities share and create new ways of being Jewish to connect us to the divine and ensure our lives are filled with purpose.

- We view Judaism as the evolving civilization of the Jewish people in an ongoing relationship with God. Our shared culture—rituals, traditions, and practices—reflect over 3,000 years of that evolution, and we continue to share and shape it today.
- We break down the walls that divide us—demonstrating what it means to be Jewish today and standing up for justice and creating a better world for all.
- We experience—and discover—God through our daily acts of ritual, creative expression, and humanity, which leads to individual spiritual fulfillment.
- We originated many of the core innovations within American Judaism and lead efforts to make our community even more forward-thinking, inclusive, and relevant. We held the first bat mitzvah in 1922, championed women's religious equality in the early 1950s, and welcome LGBT Jews, Jews of color, and Jews who partner with non Jews.
- We are committed to democratic practice in Jewish life and believe that people hold the right—and obligation—to reconstruct Judaism in order for it to remain relevant in our lives.



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 Reconstructing 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, bar or bat mitzvah ceremony, lifecycle event, and religious school service.
- Our Education Director, Rabbi Marcey Rosenbaum, 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—ensuring that our students are well-prepared for their bar or bat mitzvah.
- 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 food and coat 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 Reconstructing Judaism

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

OK, so what exactly is Reconstructing Judaism? Reconstructing 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, Reconstructing 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.

Why is there a verb in the name “Reconstructing Judaism”?

A verb best reflects our approach to Judaism as an active process and shifts the emphasis from “being”

Jewish to “doing” Jewish.

What is meant by the phrase “Deeply Rooted, Boldly Relevant”? This phrase clarifies that we live at the intersection of past and future. It expresses a reverence for Jewish tradition and a constant quest to cultivate Jewish experiences that are meaningful. We believe the important task is to create a thriving Judaism by continually reconstructing Judaism, which will enable us to meet the needs of tomorrow.



**RECONSTRUCTING
JUDAISM**

Deeply rooted. Boldly relevant.