

Cantorial Notes

February 2018

Psalm 96 says, Sing to G!d a new song. When I first started listening to Jewish liturgical music, there weren't that many choices for new, contemporary music that I was aware of. My friend next door was always playing new contemporary Christian music for me, but I didn't have that outlet. You couldn't go to the store and find it. There was Klezmer music, Israeli music, or classic liturgical music available. I was looking for Hebrew prayers with their English translations also sung. I happened to hear about Debbie Friedman and was instantly in love with the way her music made me feel both Jewishly and spiritually. I heard about Doug Cotler, and bought every tape that he had made, because his Jewish music also touched my soul in a profound way. Today, I'm in Jewish Music heaven! There is so much music to choose from. There is Jewish music that ranges from contemplative to upbeat and makes you want to clap your hands and dance in the aisles. The best part, it's all at our fingertips. Some of the shining stars of the Jewish music world have been on our own stage. Doug Cotler, a known Jewish composer came to our synagogue with Julie Silver at least 25 years ago, as she was rising in the Jewish music world. Our community invited her back maybe 10 years ago. We also had Rick Recht, the founder of Jewish Rock Radio, on our stage with his rockin' Shabbat music! And our community was able to bring in Debbie Friedman one year for a concert at Conn. College. These are only a few of the musicians that have shared there music with us.

My point to all this is that we live in a garden of beautiful Jewish music that is easily accessible. Both Rabbi Marc and I love the new liturgical music coming out of Israel, from the United States, and around the world. In the last few years we have added new music to our service in order to expand the Kabbalat Shabbat section of our worship and to other liturgy in the prayer service. I have been approached by a couple of people who have asked that I teach a class on the new music we have been using in

our services. I love the idea and will be offering this class on February 25 from 12:30 – 1:30 P.M.

Psalm 95 says, Come, let us sing joyously to G!d. I look forward to hearing your voices.

Thank you to Leslie Merwin and the Temple Emanu-El Choir for their beautiful voices on Shabbat Shira Service, and also to Harvey Snitkin for the addition of his lovely flute. Thank you to Jo-el Fernandez and Jeff Elkin for chanting Torah in January

B'shir,
Sherry