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Temple Israel Seeking Youth Director

Temple Israel is searching for a dynamic, creative individual to serve as our part-time Youth Director. This person will be responsible for overseeing and visioning the congregation's growing Youth Department.

The ideal candidate should practice Conservative Judaism; have previous Jewish programming experience; have USY experience; be comfortable with leading services; earned a college degree; have excellent communication skills; have the ability to travel; love working with teens and pre-teens; have excellent organizational skills and serve as an example for our youth.

Send letters of inquiry and resumes in confidence to: Rick Willenzik in care of the Temple office. You may also email the same information to: rickzik@gmail.com

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Music is Central to Worship at Or Olam in Cabarrus County

The gentle drumming of fingers on the darbouka drum accompanies the lilting singing of a wordless melody. The "nigoon" is at once relaxing and mesmerizing. By the time the prayer begins, congregants have been drawn into a spiritual frame of mind. Now, they are truly ready to welcome the Sabbath. This is the power of music.

Throughout our Jewish history, music has been used to praise, reflect, rejoice and pray together. The psalms were meant to be sung, not recited responsively. Temple Or Olam honors Jewish musical traditions by incorporating music into all services, holiday parties, and events. Sephardic, Ashkenazi, Mizrahi, Israeli, and American Jewish music are all part of the repertoire.

We also create new traditions. In addition to the hand drum and singing, Friday night prayers are usually accompanied by a couple of guitarists, a teenage bassist who plays Pink Floyd songs when she's not playing at services, and, often, a teenage accordionist or piano player. Some other instruments you might hear at services are violin, flute, cello, or, even rain stick. The music sets the mood, alternately joyful and contemplative.

But music is not a spectator sport at Temple Or Olam. Before many services, a basket of rhythm instruments is passed around, and children and adults alike grab tambourines, maracas, and the ever-popular "shaky eggs," all of which turn upbeat melodies into a party. Of course there is also the instrument that each congregant brings with him or her – the voice. This is not a congregation that sits silently while a rabbi or cantor sings prayers. Voices ring out, often in rounds taught by the children, who learned them at religious school. It doesn't matter if your voice is opera quality or "singing in the shower" quality; it's welcome here.

Torah portions are chanted on the fourth Friday of every month. (On the second Friday we hold a shorter, child-centered service.) Sometimes the melody is the familiar trope that you hear at many American synagogues, but other times you might hear Baghdadi trope, a Middle Eastern melody with a very different sound, exotic to western ears.

If you're interested in hearing more of the music of Temple Or Olam, there are two CDs available for purchase: "Likrat Shabbat," a collection of Shabbat songs, and "Musika Olam," a selection of Jewish world music.

But the best way to experience the music is to join us for a service. Services are held the 2nd and 4th Fridays of the month, at 7 PM at McGill Baptist Church in Concord.


For information on services, or to order CDs, please visit our website, www.or-olam.org, email us at info@or-olam.org, or call 704-720-7577. ☆



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