



a n s c h e
c h e s e d

"The City Without Jews (Die Stadt ohne Juden)"

*H. K. Breslauer's 1924 silent masterpiece, based on
the bestselling dystopian novel by Hugo Bettauer.*



A Cine-Concert with Live Original Music Monday, May 19, 7:30pm

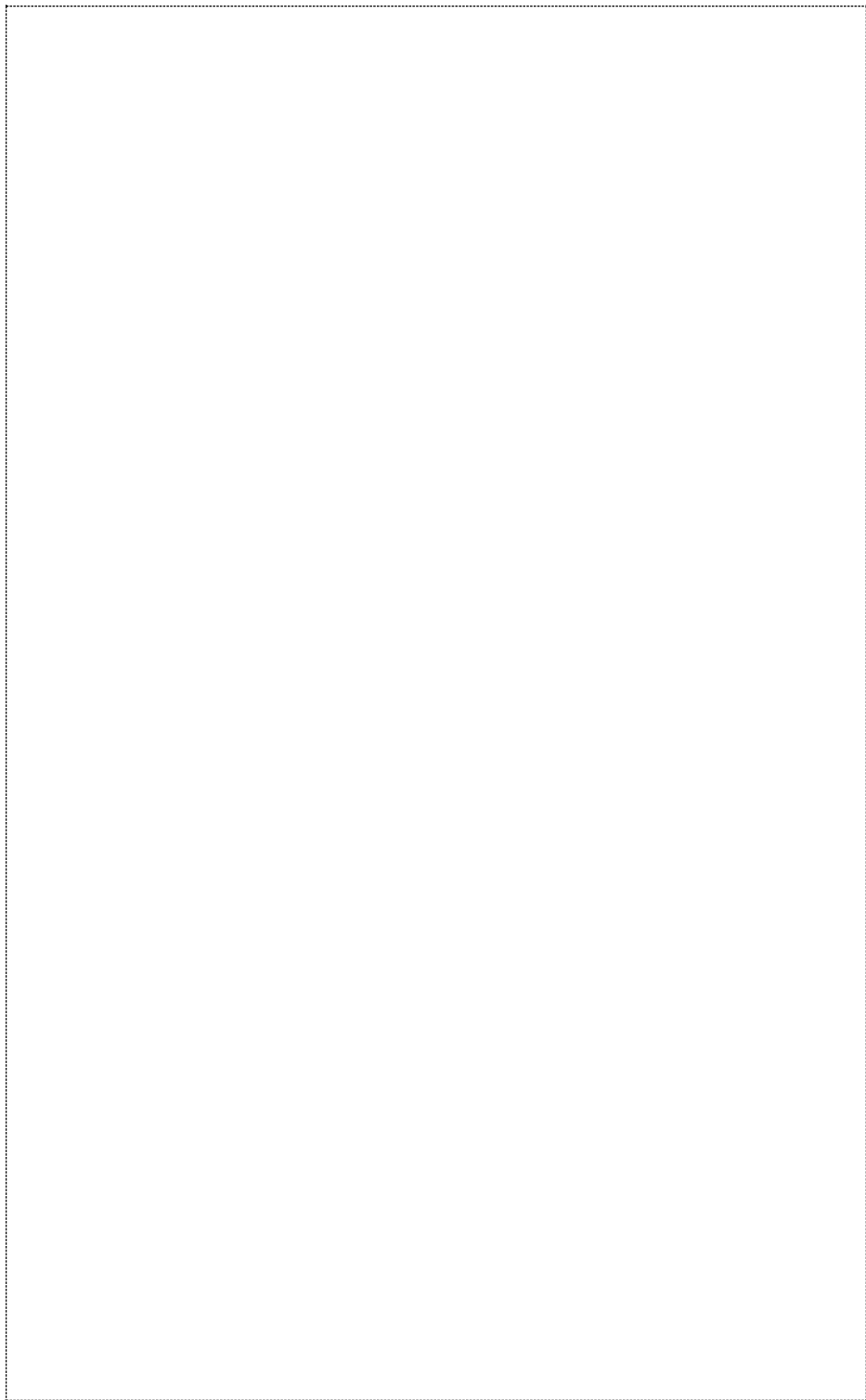
composed and performed by
world-renowned klezmer violinist **Alicia Svigals**
and celebrated silent film pianist **Donald Sosin**

*Introduced by Shirei Chesed Community Chorus and Cantor Natasha J. Hirschhorn
in performance of Jewish Choral music from the Weimar Republic*

— with support from —



251 West 100th Street | New York, NY 10025



Jewish Choral Music from the Weimar Republic with Shirei Chesed Choir

Ma Tovu

Text: Numbers 24:5 and Morning prayers

Music: Frederik Piket (1903-1974)

Soloist: Natasha Hirschhorn

Published in the USA in 1958

How good are your tents, O Jacob;
Your dwellings, O Israel!

It is through your abundant love that I enter Your home,
and bow in awe in the direction of Your holy temple.

Adonai, I love the temple,
Your home and the place where Your glory dwells.

I will bow down low and prostrate myself
before Adonai, my Creator.

May my prayer find favor in Your sight, Adonai.
In the abundance of Your loving-kindness
answer me in the truth of Your salvation.

L'Cho Adonoi

Text: Torah service

Music: Leon Kornitzer (1875-1947)

Published in Germany in 1924

Yours, Adonai, is the greatness,
the might, the glory, the victory, and the beauty,
for everything in heaven and on earth is Yours;
Yours, Adonai, is the kingdom,
and You are uplifted over all rulers.

V'sham'ru

Text: Exodus 31:16-17

Music: Henry Schalit (1886-1976)

Published in Germany in 1933

The children of Israel will guard the Shabbat,
to make the Shabbat an eternal covenant
for all their generations.

It is an eternal sign between me
and the children of Israel,

Because in six days Adonai created
the heavens and the earth,
And on the seventh day God rested and was refreshed.

Kiddush

Text: Friday night liturgy

Music: Kurt Weill (1900-1950)

Soloist: Toby Banks

Premiered on Friday evening, May 10, 1946, at the Park Avenue Synagogue's "Fourth Annual Service of Liturgical Music by Contemporary Composers."

Praised be You, Adonai, our God, Ruler of the universe,
who has sanctified us through God's commandments
and has taken delight in us.

Out of love and with favor
You have given us the Holy Sabbath as a heritage,
in remembrance of Your creation.

For that first of our sacred days
recalls our exodus and liberation from Egypt.

You chose us from among all Your peoples,
and in Your love and favor made us holy
by giving us the Holy Sabbath as a joyous heritage.

Praised are You, Adonai, our God,
who hallows the Sabbath.

The City Without Jews (Die Stadt ohne Juden)

The City Without Jews (Die Stadt ohne Juden), H.K. Breslauer's 1924 silent masterpiece, is based on the bestselling dystopian novel by Hugo Bettauer. It was produced two years after the book's publication and, tragically, shortly before the satirical events depicted in the fictional story transformed into all-too-horrific reality. All complete prints were thought to be destroyed, but thanks to the discovery of a nitrate print in a Parisian flea market in 2015, this "lost" film can once again be appreciated in its unfortunately ever-relevant entirety. Set in the Austrian city of Utopia (a thinly-disguised stand-in for Vienna), the story follows the political and personal consequences of an antisemitic law passed by the National Assembly forcing all Jews to leave the country. At first, the decision is met with celebration, but when the citizens of Utopia eventually come to terms with the loss of the Jewish population – and the resulting economic and cultural decline – the National Assembly must decide whether to invite the Jews back. Though darkly comedic in tone and stylistically influenced by German Expressionism, the film nonetheless contains ominous and eerily realistic sequences, such as shots of freight trains transporting Jews out of the city. The film's stinging critique of Nazism is part of the reason it was no longer screened in public after 1933.

About the Performers



Svigals is the world's leading klezmer violinist and a founder of the Grammy-winning Klezmatics. After meeting at a silent film festival in Italy, the two soon recorded their first original score for the 1923 German film *The Ancient Law*, followed by *The City Without Jews* and *The Man Without a World*.

Donald Sosin is a composer, arranger, pianist and conductor. He grew up in Rye, NY and Munich, Germany, and holds composition degrees from the University of Michigan and Columbia University. He played on Broadway in the 70's and 80's. He has been composing and performing silent film music for over fifty years. His work as a silent film composer and pianist has taken him all over the United States from Lincoln Center, MoMA and the Kennedy Center to the

Seattle, San Francisco and Telluride Film Festivals, and twice a year to Italy's silent film festivals in Bologna and Pordenone, as well as festivals in ten other countries in Europe and Asia. He has written many types of music from theater and dance pieces to television and contemporary film scores, in addition to the silent film music he has recorded for the Criterion, Kino, Milestone and Flicker Alley labels. Donald has had commissions from the Chicago Symphony Chorus, the San Francisco Chamber Orchestra and other ensembles. He has played his scores for Jewish-themed silent films— THE ANCIENT LAW, JEWISH LUCK, BREAKING HOME TIES and Lubitsch's THREE WOMEN—at the New York Jewish Film Festival and brought the THE ANCIENT LAW there in 2019 with klezmer violinist Alicia Svigals. They have written two other film scores— CITY WITHOUT JEWS (1924) and THE MAN WITHOUT A WORLD (1990). All three films have been performed live by the duo around the US and Europe, and are available on DVD/BluRay. Sosin's one-act children's opera ESTHER was performed at the National Yiddish Book Center in 2013. Other Jewish music includes Yiddish folk songs arrangements for chamber ensemble; a Shabbat cantata, "Shir Hadash (1974) commissioned by Community Synagogue of Rye, NY, a short opera on the I. B. Singer story, "A Parakeet Named Dreidel" and several choral psalm settings, which were orchestrated under the title "Three Psalms" and premiered in 2009 by the Jerusalem Symphony Orchestra. He lives in Lakeville CT with his wife, singer Joanna Seaton. They have two children. Website: oldmoviemusic.com

Alicia Svigals, violinist/composer and a founder of the Grammy-winning Klezmatics, is the world's foremost klezmer fiddler. She almost single handedly revived the tradition of klezmer fiddling, which had been on the brink of extinction until she recorded her debut album *Fidl* in the 1990's. Svigals has performed with and written for violinist Itzhak Perlman, and has worked with the Kronos Quartet, playwrights Tony Kushner and Eve Ensler, poet Allen Ginsburg, Robert Plant and Jimmy Page of Led Zeppelin, Debbie Friedman and Chava Albershteyn. She was awarded a Foundation for Jewish Culture commission for her original score to the 1918 film *The Yellow Ticket* and is a MacDowell fellow. In February 2018, Svigals and jazz pianist Uli Geissendoerfer released *Beregovski Suite*, their fantasy on klezmer melodies culled from the archive of early 20th century Soviet Jewish ethnomusicologist Moshe Beregovski. In May 2023, Svigals was awarded the honorary degree of Doctor of Humane Letters by the Jewish Theological Seminary for "extraordinary contributions to the arts and Jewish life." In June 2024 she released her newest album, *Fidl Afire*, on the Borscht Beat label - a return to her roots with a full-on party band. In August 2024 she was awarded the 2024 NYSCA/NYFA Artist Fellowship in Folk/Traditional arts.

Shirei Chesed Community Chorus at Ansche Chesed

*Hazzan Natasha J. Hirschhorn, Artistic Director
Marc Szechter, Choral Intern*

Shirei Chesed celebrates its 20th year of building community through learning a rich and diverse repertoire of Jewish music, bringing harmony into a world that needs it more than ever. Founded in 2005 by the generous support of the Rabbi Gershon Schwartz memorial fund, our 4-part chorus brings together lovers of choral singing from both Ansche Chesed and the wider Jewish community. Our recent performances include classical programs with The Bacchanalia String Orchestra, a jazz concert with The Afro-Semitic Experience ensemble, Oratorio Souls on Fire based on the book by Elie Wiesel and a collaboration with the Grammy nominated vocal sextet The Western Wind.

In addition to our concert work, we help build community through song in our Shirei Shabbat Friday night services at Ansche Chesed.

If you are inspired to join us, please reach out to Cantor Hirschhorn at NHirschhorn@AnscheChesed.org for more information or to schedule an audition.

Sopranos: Alina Zucker Aronoff, Helene Benaim, Rachel Brudner, Diane Finger, Fran Gordon, Naomi Marcus, Diane Schoer, Ellen Tucker

Altos: Sara Berman, Alma Birnboim, Madeleine Cahn, Yona Corn, Ronnee Schier David, Barbara Friedland, Ella Gregory, Judith B. Lahn, Nancy Reibstein, Cherie Rosen, Elizabeth Wilen-Berg

Tenors: Martin Green, David Golden, Alex Guerrero, Ariela Heilman, Marc Szechter

Baritones: Will Brockman, Marvin Davenport, Phillip Fisherman, Nick James, Richard Mark, Michael Mortenson, Bruce Noble, Christopher Rothko, Jeff F. Segall, Bill Zukof



Hazzan Natasha Hirschhorn has been privileged to serve as Cantor and Music Director of Congregation Ansche Chesed since 2004. She also teaches at the H.L. Miller Cantorial School at the Jewish Theological Seminary since 2006. A native of

Kyiv, Ukraine, Hazzan Hirschhorn studied musicology, piano, and composition at Moscow's Gnessin Musical College and the Kyiv State Conservatory. Ordained by the Academy for Jewish Religion, Hazzan Hirschhorn is the author of numerous liturgical and secular compositions and an accomplished performer and recording artist.

She has been featured as a singer, pianist, conductor and composer in 10 recordings, including her solo CD of original music “They Call Me”, as well as at congregations, music festivals, and concert halls throughout the country, including Jazz at Lincoln Center, the Kennedy Center, Toronto Jewish Music Festival, and the Curtis Institute of Music, among others. Her compositions include commissioned works from Hazamir: the International Jewish Teen Choir, the Bacchanalia String Orchestra, Bucks County Choral Society, Nashirah and the Western Wind Ensemble.



Marc Szechter grew up in Hartsdale, New York, where he attended the Solomon Schechter School of Westchester from kindergarten through twelfth grade. Marc started playing piano at age five and saxophone at age ten, but he discovered his love for Jewish

music while participating in HaZamir: The International Jewish Teen Choir in high school. Marc graduated from Muhlenberg College in Allentown, Pennsylvania in 2022 with BA in Jewish studies and music composition, and he was named a semi-finalist in the Fulbright Program. While in college, Marc composed several musical settings of Jewish liturgical texts and wrote an honor’s thesis on the development of cantorial music. After spending a year learning at Yeshivas Tiferes Bachurim in Morristown, New Jersey, Marc began his cantorial studies at the Jewish Theological Seminary in the fall of 2023. He currently serves as the cantorial intern at the Westchester Jewish Center and a choral intern at Shirei Chesed Community Chorus.



Toby Banks is a second-year cantorial student at the Jewish Theological Seminary. Prior to Cantorial School, she made a name for herself in the world of avant-garde and contemporary classical music and has been a

featured soloist in countless premieres and recordings with such world-renowned composers as Meredith Monk, Thomas Pasatieri, Huang Ruo, and Gerald Cohen. Toby sang the lead female role in Robert Eén's opera *The Escape Artist* at Disney Hall in Los Angeles and repeat performances in Maharashtra, India. She is the alto soloist in the recording of Emerson Eads' *Mass for the Oppressed*, a piece which she has also performed with multiple orchestras and choruses across the country. Described by the *New York Times* as "fresh-voiced and sympathetic," Toby has performed as a featured soloist with opera companies and symphony orchestras from New York City to Los Angeles, Anchorage to Honolulu and beyond. Toby is currently the cantorial intern at Brotherhood Synagogue in Gramercy Park and is looking forward to joining Anshe Chesed as its cantorial intern in the Fall.

About the Composers

FREDERIK PIKET (1903-1974), grew up in Vienna, where he began studying violin at the age of five. Between 1924 and 1929 he attended the Vienna State Academy of Music, where he studied piano as well as music theory, counterpoint, composition, and conducting. Subsequently he relocated to Berlin in 1930, where he continued his music studies, earning the Mendelssohn Prize for composition in 1931, while conducting opera and operetta productions at several local opera houses or companies in Germany, Austria, and Switzerland. In 1933, when the National Socialists assumed power in Germany as a result of the preceding elections, Piket left for Barcelona, where he remained until his immigration to the United States in 1940. Like many émigré musicians in America at that time, he earned his living as a freelance musician—arranger, pianist, accompanist, teacher, and coach. But he soon developed a reputation in the New York area as a brilliant pianist, and during the 1940s he achieved several successes as a composer. Among the first was his orchestral suite *The Funnies*, based on comic strip characters of the day such as Superman, Orphan Annie, Gasoline Alley, and the Gumps. His overture, *Curtain Raiser to an American Play*, performed by the New York Philharmonic conducted by Dimitri Mitropoulos, won him the Gershwin Prize.

Like many Jewish émigré musicians in the 1930s and 1940s who were essentially refugees from the Third Reich and the war in Europe, and who became attracted to Jewish music in the United States, Piket had not been

involved in synagogue music—nor in the synagogue experience—before his American years. Nor had he ever thought of following that route when he immigrated. He had been given no Jewish education, and he possessed no knowledge of Hebrew beyond basic reading acquired for this bar mitzvah ceremony. In the 1950s, when the necessities of life intervened and his freelance musical work was insufficient to support a family of three children, he turned to the American Reform Synagogue and its practical opportunities for organists, choirmasters, singers, and composers and arrangers. Ultimately, it is his Hebrew liturgical music—geared primarily to the Reform format of the 1950s through the early 1970s—for which he is likely to be best remembered, including *Ma Tov*, published in 1958.

*Excerpted from the article in Milken Archive by
Neil W. Levin*

LEON KORNITZER (1875–1947), was a ḥazzan and composer born and educated in Vienna. The son and grandson of ḥazzanim, Kornitzer served the communities of Klattau, Saaz, and Prague before being called to the post of chief cantor at the New Israelite Temple Society in Hamburg in 1913.

His imaginative and skillful compositions, including “L’cho Adonoy” published in 1924, the year *The City Without Jews* was filmed, are in the tradition of mid-19th century cantors and composers Sulzer (Vienna) and Lewandowski (Berlin) but they also evince the influence

of 19th-century German romantic style. Kornitzer was the editor of *Der Juedische Kantor* for ten years from its inception in 1927 and edited a collection of liturgical songs and instrumental compositions, *Juedische Klaenge* (1933). In August 1939, he and his family emigrated to Palestine, where he became known for his scholarly and musical contributions to the Palestine Broadcasting Service (later Kol Israel). Until his death in 1947, Kornitzer served as conductor of the choir at the Central Synagogue in Haifa, which he had founded in 1939, and served as cantor on High Holidays at a synagogue in Jerusalem.

From the website of the University of Hamburg

HEINRICH SCHALIT (1886-1976) was born in Vienna and studied organ and composition at the State Academy of Music, where one of his professors, Joseph Labor, was also one of Arnold Schoenberg's composition teachers. A widely respected composer, poet, organist, and music director, Schalit has served as an organist at the Great Synagogue in Munich since 1927 until 1933. Forced to leave Germany, Schalit subsequently accepted an offer to become the musical director of the Great Synagogue in Rome, where he remained until 1940 when he was exiled from Italy, and immigrated to America. Despite a large and varied body of work he has produced in almost four decades of his life since then, his first synagogue composition - a setting of V'shamru for the Sabbath eve liturgy which you will hear today - remains one of his seminal

achievements. It received its first performance on September 16, 1932, at the Lutzowstrasse Synagogue in Berlin, Germany, with Schalit conducting, and was published as a part of his first full Sabbath eve service, *Eine Freitagabend Liturgie* (“A Friday Evening Liturgy”) in 1933 and later premiered in America at the Stephen Wise Free synagogue in New York in 1952.

Excerpted from the introduction to the Transcontinental Music Publications edition of Sabbath Eve Liturgy

KURT WEILL (1900-1950) was born in Dessau into a Jewish family with a long ancestry in Germany. Since his father was a cantor, Weill's early musical leanings were supported by the family. Although generally a poor student, Weill managed to scrape by, supporting himself through private lessons and by directing synagogue choirs. The aspiring musician quickly became a fixture in the vibrant cultural scene of 1920s Berlin. He had some early successes, but it was his partnership with Brecht that transformed Weill into an international sensation. *The Threepenny Opera* which premiered on 31 August 1928, was a hit, establishing Weill as one of the most successful composers of Weimar Germany. Although Weill's operas continued to be popular successes, Nazi protests frequently interfered with performances, and the theatre directors became ever more reluctant to stage his work. Like many other artists in his situation, Weill repeatedly misread political developments, believing that things were bound to get better. Eventually he learned that he

and his wife were officially on the Nazi blacklist and were due to be arrested, so in March 1933 he crossed the border to France, and subsequently to the USA in 1935, where he hoped to rebuild his career. Despite his financial success in the United States, however, he never achieved the sort of fame or influence that he had enjoyed during the Weimar years. The composer never forgot his roots, and unlike many other émigrés who struggled to downplay their Jewishness, was an early figure in memorializing the Holocaust and raising public awareness of the plight of Europe's Jews.

Commissioned by Cantor David Putterman, *Kiddush* is one of Weill's only liturgical compositions. Premiered on Friday evening, May 10, 1946, at the Park Avenue Synagogue's "Fourth Annual Service of Liturgical Music by Contemporary Composers," it underscored Weill's vision of liturgy and theater as not necessarily mutually exclusive and was most likely the first Hebrew liturgical piece for worship to reflect so directly the influences of jazz and blues.

Excerpted from the article in Milken Archive by Neil W. Levin and <https://holocaustmusic.ort.org/politics-and-propaganda/third-reich/weill-kurt/>

Upcoming Events at Ansche Chesed:

Shavuot Tikkun Under the Stars: Healing in Jewish, Muslim and Christian Traditions Sunday, June 1 from 7:30 – 9:30pm at Ansche Chesed

Join us to greet Shavuot with study, celebration, cheesecake and light nosh on the AC roof. We will be joined by our Muslim partners from the Peace Islands Institute and neighbors from Trinity Lutheran Church. Together, we will study texts about healing from our different religious traditions, as through study and interfaith connection, we heal.

RSVP at AnscheChesed.org/Tikkun.



See our Shavuot service schedule at AnscheChesed.org/Shavuot.

Pride Month Shabbat: A Salute to Rabbi Sharon Kleinbaum Friday, June 6 at 7:30pm at Ansche Chesed

For more than 30 years, Sharon Kleinbaum served Congregation Beth Simchat Torah, NYC's prominent LGBTQ community. In her new retirement, she remains an inspiring progressive activist. Join us as Sharon reflects on the long arc of her career, the changes she has seen in LGBTQ Jewish life and the challenges ahead.

Register at AnscheChesed.org/Pride.

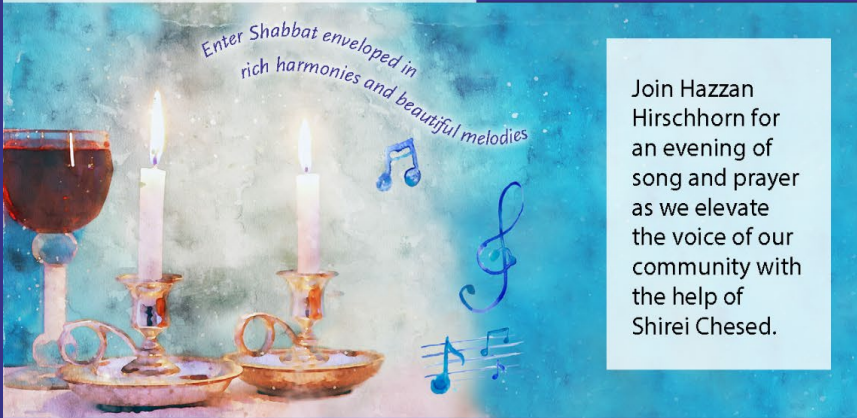


FRIDAY, MAY 30
6:30PM

SHIREI SHABBAT



@ANSCHECHESED



Join Hazzan Hirschhorn for an evening of song and prayer as we elevate the voice of our community with the help of Shirei Chesed.

Shirei Shabbat: Musical Kabbalat Shabbat Service and Dinner with Zemirot

Service at 6:30pm
Dinner around 7:45pm

Lift your voice with us in holy harmony, b'nima kedosha. Come and hear what musical surprises Hazzan Hirschhorn, intern Marc Szechter and the Shirei Chesed Chorus have for you!

Stick around after services for a delicious catered Shabbat Dinner on the Roof (weather permitting), followed by spirited zemirot!

Please register for the dinner at
AnsheChesed.org/Dinner



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