



CONGREGATION CHEVRA THILIM

FOUNDED IN 1892

751 – 25th Avenue

San Francisco, CA 94121

(415) 752-2866

www.sfshul.org

ABOUT CONGREGATION CHEVRA THILIM

OUR MISSION

Congregation Chevra Thilim is a contemporary Orthodox synagogue dedicated to promoting a nurturing environment for spiritual, social and intellectual growth. Our community strives to develop a deeper connection to the values and ideals of the Torah in the context of the modern world.

HISTORY

Congregation Chevra Thilim was founded in 1892 and is among the oldest traditional synagogues west of the Mississippi, was founded by five men as the "Society for the Recitation of Psalms." The synagogue first appears in the San Francisco City Directory of 1896 at 1036 Folsom Street and then in 1903 at 966 Howard Street. The building was destroyed by the fire after the 1906 earthquake. After the fire, it was reestablished at 1046 Howard Street, on the corner of Russ Street.

By 1932, the congregation continued to prosper and a committee was delegated to purchase the existing lot at 745 25th Avenue. "A synagogue was built that surpassed the older building in capacity and in beauty." Over time, additional properties were purchased totaling six lots in all. In 1946 a larger synagogue center was dedicated.

"Ever since his arrival in San Francisco, it has been the ambition of Rabbi Morris Fischel to present to the Jews of San Francisco at large, and to the Jews of the Richmond District in particular, a House of Worship, the physical beauty of which shall compare with the lofty purpose for which it was dedicated, and whose spiritual mission shall be to present to our people the everlasting beauty of traditional Judaism in such a manner that our present American generation may well understand and be proud of. This was the primary reason for engaging in the present day elaborate expansion program, involving thousands of dollars." **From the Dedication Book of August 11, 1946**

In 1960, construction of a two-story five-room Hebrew School and playground was completed and the synagogue was also remodeled. Chevra was the only synagogue in the community that supported a Hebrew school of its own. Classes were held daily, including Sunday, with over 100 children participating. An involved group of synagogue leaders was credited with undertaking such a momentous task.

OUR PRESENT AND OUR FUTURE

History tends to repeat itself, and the task remains the same. Creating an enriching environment for Jewish exploration, study and spirituality in the context of a building that is representative of the people who use it is pivotal to sustaining our congregation.

Since 1960, Chevra has continued to thrive. Our Rabbi, Shlomo Zarchi, is a young energetic man who is respected not only within our synagogue community but also throughout the Bay Area for his understanding and incredible knowledge as well as his ability to teach and stimulate others. He is an observant and traditional man and is well known for welcoming and embracing individuals with all levels of observance. Just as San



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Francisco is known for its diversity, Chevra is a unique Orthodox synagogue where everyone is valued, respected and welcomed.

OUR CHEVRA COMMUNITY OFFERS:

Prayer services, regular Shabbat and holiday services

Joyous celebrations for life cycle events

Support for those who are ill and/or grieving

A well-attended religious school

Ongoing educational opportunities for children and adults

Social events which include community Shabbat dinners, holiday celebrations and women’s evenings

Opportunities to explore our Jewish heritage

Individual attention and recognition to every member

OUR FUTURE

As our world changes, the needs of our congregants and the community at large change. Synagogues of today can no longer be only a place of worship. They need to be communal spaces, serving as a gathering place for Jews to meet, socialize, educate the young and old through Sunday School, Adult Education, Lectures and other events, be an extended family; a warm and welcoming community. This is what we are and how we hope to continue to grow.

We are a vibrant community with many families of all ages and diversity. We are the future of the Jewish community in the Richmond district, dedicated to bringing our culture and traditions to life in a modern format to blend with the realities of the modern world. Our vision is to grow and expand not only our community and membership, but to do this through richer and more in depth learning, interactive programming and opportunities for social experiences in a Jewish context.

We need your help to expand the programming and activities that we are able to offer. Through this expansion, we will be able to welcome more people under our tent and create more opportunities for engagement on many levels.

The age and condition of the synagogue limit our ability to meet those needs. Our existing building limits our functionality and does not provide an inviting and modern space. We have planned a modern building to welcome our congregants and to grow our community by attracting new families, couples, and individuals. We have increased the volume and quality of our programs and have created more opportunities for higher levels of education and socialization.

We seek to continue to create an extended family that joins together to celebrate Shabbat, holidays, life cycle and social events. We intend to expand our educational center and offer more opportunities for stimulating intellectual exchange and dialogue.