

**Notes from the Cantor – January 2006**

## **Celebrating Our Victory of Long Ago.....**

**By  
Cantor Florence F. Merel**

Shabbat Shirah, the Sabbath of Song, is the Shabbat when we read Parashat Beshalach (Exodus 13:17-17:16). We chant Shirat Hayam – the Song at the Sea, which is written in poetic form, and celebrates the victory of Moses and Miriam and the Jewish people as they escape Pharaoh's army and safely cross the Red Sea.

“Then Moses and the Israelites sang this song to the Lord. I will sing to the Lord, for He has triumphed gloriously.....Then Miriam the prophetess, Aaron's sister, took a timbrel in her hand, and all the women went out after her in dance with timbrels.....”

Mi Chamocha, our prayer of redemption that is chanted in every service, is also found in this Torah portion. Though this year Shabbat Shirah falls on February 11<sup>th</sup>, it is fitting to present special music programs and classes during this time of year.

On Friday, February 4<sup>th</sup>, there will be sermon in song about the lives and music of Jewish Broadway composers. Several of Temple Sinai's talented teenagers will present the music of Stephen Schwartz, Richard Rodgers, and others. Our 6<sup>th</sup> graders will also lead us in a new musical setting of Mi Chamocha.

On Friday, February 11<sup>th</sup>, Temple Sinai's Adult Choir will participate in leading the music during our Shabbat service.

On Friday, February 18<sup>th</sup>, I will present and teach a variety of styles of contemporary Jewish folk music. Joining me will be, Eric Komar, guitarist, songleader, and composer, who is also a major editor at Transcontinental Music Publications, the music-publishing arm of the URJ.

Let us commemorate our ancestor's victorious crossing of the Red Sea as we celebrate Shabbat together and enwrap ourselves in the world of Jewish music!