

January 15, 2008

POSITION DESCRIPTION

RABBI

CONGREGATION DARCHEI NOAM ST. LOUIS PARK, MINNESOTA

ABOUT THE CONGREGATION

Congregation Darchei Noam is a modern Orthodox congregation that was established by approximately 35 families in July 2005 and has grown to over 55 families. Men and women are separated by a *mechitzah* during services, and most of our members are *shomer shabbat*. Our *posek* is Rabbi Moshe Simkovich, formerly Head of School at Stern Hebrew High School, Philadelphia. Darchei Noam is located in St. Louis Park, an attractive inner ring suburb of Minneapolis (under 10 minutes from downtown). The congregation currently meets in the basement of an educational building attached to and owned by a church, an arrangement sanctioned by our *posek* in consultation with HaRav Dovid Cohen. We have recently purchased property within the *eruv* that is suitable for building a synagogue.

Members of Darchei Noam serve as *shlichei tzibbur* and *baalei keriah*. *Divrei Torah* are delivered each week by members of our congregation. In addition to Shabbat and holiday services, we hold *Shacharit* services at least three times a week and daily *maariv* or *mincha/maariv* services, depending on the time of year. We offer a weekly *Gemara shiur*, a weekly Torah class, and occasional seminars on salient topics in Modern Orthodoxy. All classes are open to men and women. We hold regular *Shabbatonim* with invited scholars that attract people from a wide cross section of the local Jewish community.

We are committed to living a Torah lifestyle, at home and in the world around us. Darchei Noam is bound by *halakha*. As a community, we are united in our passionate belief in the value of a life guided by traditional Jewish practice and law. At the same time, our congregants embrace a philosophy of synthesizing Torah study and practice with life, study, and careers in the secular world. We believe that engagement with the secular world can enrich us as individual Jews and as a Jewish community.

We are committed to spiritual growth. Darchei Noam is dedicated to making the religious experiences of all its members meaningful. Within the boundaries set by *halakha*, we seek to involve all members in Darchei Noam's *tefillot*, educational programs, *divrei torah*, and leadership structure.

We are committed to our children, teenagers, and young adults. Darchei Noam is an open and welcoming congregation for young families and provides programming, regularly on Shabbat and periodically at other times, for its younger members. There are approximately 35 children (high-school age or below) in the

congregation. Nearly all the elementary and middle-school children attend Jewish day schools including Torah Academy, a Torah U'Mesorah school, and the two community schools, the St. Paul Talmud Torah Day School and the Minneapolis Jewish Day School. Most of the high school age children attend St. Louis Park High School, but some attend the local Bais Yaakov or yeshiva day schools around the country. A high priority for our congregation is to improve Jewish schooling options in the Twin Cities at both the elementary and high school level.

We are committed to Israel. Our congregation is committed to the State of Israel, whose welfare we pray for each week. Many of our children have continued their studies in Israel, and we expect that many of the younger ones will follow suit.

We are committed to the larger Jewish community. Many of our members play active roles in Jewish communal activities, including the schools, social service agencies, the Jewish Community Center, and the Jewish Federation. Our members played a major role in establishing the community's *Eruv*.

CONGREGATIONAL GOALS

- Strengthen programming to develop a community still more committed to learning, minyan, and spiritual growth (ongoing)
- Engage children/teenagers, and provide programming for these age groups that promotes a strong bond with the synagogue and with *yahadut* (ongoing)
- Build membership to 100 families (5 years).
- Move to own building (5 years).

PERSONAL QUALITIES AND SKILLS SOUGHT

Our new rabbi will have studied and received *Semichah* at a top orthodox rabbinical seminary and will be qualified to resolve *Halachic* questions for the congregation and, when consulted, individual members. We value secular education as well as Torah learning. We expect our rabbi to embody not only commitment to Jewish practice, but also the intellectual openness and engagement that mark our membership.

We seek a candidate who has:

- Personal warmth, strong interpersonal skills and an ability to develop rapport with our children and teenagers
- Strong teaching, counseling and public speaking skills
- Energy and demonstrated leadership skills, and is both self-reliant and a self-starter
- The ability to successfully interact with other Jewish community leaders across the denominational spectrum and represent our congregation in the broader community

DUTIES OF THE RABBI

General:

Darchei Noam's rabbi is expected to do whatever is necessary, within the constraints of a part-time position, to help the congregation achieve its short- and long-term goals, specified above. He is also expected to be the *kehilla's* public face and work to promote Darchei Noam's visibility in the community at large.

Specific:

- *Shiurim*: 2x per week
- Actively engage children, teenagers, and college age students through programming and other relationship-building activities
- Counseling
- Life cycle events: Officiate at weddings, *shiva* houses, funerals
- Sermons: approximately once a month
- Develop relationships with congregants/potential members
- Work with other local rabbis on community issues of importance to Darchei Noam
- Visit congregants in local hospitals

Not required: *Shlelach tzibbur*, *Ba'al tokeah*, *Ba'al Koreh*, serve as youth/NCSY director; participate in local day schools (not required but expected to serve as advocate for community); *Shul* newsletter; *Mashgiach*.