

Rabbi Michael S. Beals

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January 25, 2011

Dear President Marla and Rabbi Micah:

As the “senior member” of the Delaware Association of Rabbis and Chazzanim, I have a certain perspective of varying qualities of Federation Shabbat experiences throughout the years. It is not hyperbole to state that the Federation Shabbat hosted by Temple Beth El and led by Rabbi Micah Backer-Klein was the best one that I can remember in recent history. I am always happy to lead services at my own synagogue, but I cannot remember having fun at services the way I did last Friday night.

Rabbi Yair Robinson of Congregation Beth Emeth turned to me at one point in the service and whispered in my ear with glee, “this is like being back in rabbinical school.” I know Rabbi Micah was worried as this was his first Federation Shabbat and he had never seen it done before now. Maybe that was for the best as all his insights and decisions were perfect ... from placing the rabbis and cantors on the *bimah* so we could feed off each other’s energy, to having the rabbis presenting unique *kavanot* before key prayers, which had never been done and was a great way of effectively tapping into the rabbis’ talents, to the wonderful alternative, out-of-the-siddur readings, to the choir’s wonderfully original setting of the Psalm 150, to Rabbi Micah’s own insights and joyous leading of services. The Executive Vice President of Adas Kodesh Shel Emeth, Molly Makar, turned to me at the end of services and said, “we are going to have to work real hard to top this next year when it’s our turn.” And she is right!

Your professional and volunteer staff, from Dee to the Klezmer Band, made everyone feel so welcome, from the moment we entered your *shul*, to the lovely *Tu B'Shevat* seder with the wonderful *haggadot* (which I used the next day for our own Hebrew School *Tu B'Shevat* celebration), to the lovely tree-themed table signs, to the Boscov-catered dinner and dessert – well it was all just wonderful. Please feel free to read this letter at your next Board Meeting. We, who run synagogues and serve the Jewish people are so often bombarded with complaints, it is important to sometimes balance that with letters of praise, such as this one. *Mazel tov* on a job well-done!

Warmly,



Rabbi Michael