

As you may know, I served Congregation B'nai Chaim for a ten year period. During that time, as I told the children, we grew, bought this building, grew some more and flourished. My experience with B'nai Chaim could not have been better. As a rabbi who loves children, I was probably happiest moving from class to class on Sunday mornings. Or maybe it was when I was greeting parents and their kids at the front door, giving hugs and high fives, flipping the occasional, flip-able kid, and getting Temple business done all the while.

B'nai Chaim is *the* essential Jewish institution for this area of Greater Denver. It is especially but not exclusively so for families who wish to give their children both a Jewish education and experience. The future of this congregation is bound up in the number of children who people its religious school. But to have a warm and receptive community that provides social and religious opportunities to empty nesters is, in itself, no less important. In actuality, B'nai Chaim has developed programming and services which appeal to all age groups. It is what makes it so successful as a community.

What began way back in 1992 has come a long way in its over-two-decade history. What is stored away in the time capsule on the side of this building represents the loving care of many, many former and present families, people

who are all here, in one way or another, this evening. What hangs within the oversized mezuzah at the front door reminds us of the purpose of this Temple and all those who serve it...to love God and to teach God's laws and to provide for Jewish life here, at the foothills of this city.

Tonight, we formally begin a new chapter in Congregation B'nai Chaim's history. I, myself, couldn't be happier to welcome the person you've selected to lead you. In Cantor Kim, we have the warm and welcoming presence who will never be shy to hug our children as they come into Religious School; we have the talent who will continue the Temple's rich musical traditions and who, with her husband, Brian, will invite if not compel us to sing with her throughout our services; but even more essentially than these critical qualities is that, in Cantor Kim, we have someone who not only is interested but is passionate about intertwining her life with ours. She will be there for us in good times and at not-so-good ones. She, indeed, has rapidly become the glue that is holding us close and gathering us to being the kind of Jewish community we are capable of being. *Kol HaCavod*, well done on your selection. *Hatzlacha*, may good fortune reign down upon us as we move forward into the future. *B'v'racha*, we ask God's blessing as we install Cantor Kim Harris as the new spiritual leader of this congregation and all its endeavors.