

Dear Friends,
As you now know, our wonderful Director of Education Richard Abrams has been called to serve as Director of Lifelong Learning at Temple B'nai Jeshurun in Short Hills, New Jersey, beginning July 1, 2008. This move, to a congregation much closer to his home in Montclair, will allow Rick to spend more time with his family.

While I am filled with deep sadness at his departure, I am profoundly grateful to Rick for his five years of dedicated and loving service to Temple Beth El. In the time he has been with us, his passion for Jewish education has moved young and old alike. Whether singing with our two-year-olds or playing banjo at Family Shabbat, whether inspiring 165 fifth and sixth graders assembled together or nurturing one student at a time, Rick has made clear his love for Judaism and for our children. His efforts to grow our Institute for Jewish Studies Adult Education and Family Education programs leave us with solid foundations on which we will continue to build.

Rick has been my friend for fifteen years. Working beside him has been a privilege and a joy. A rabbi could not ask for a better colleague. He, Lori, Sonya and Micah have become cherished members of our temple family, which they will always be.

I hope you will join us on Friday evening, May 2, 2008 at 7:15 pm when we will honor Rick Abrams and thank him for his five years of extraordinary leadership.

Our search for Rick's successor is nearly complete. A search committee, chaired by our vice president in charge of education, Michael Nissim, was selected to guide us through this process. They interviewed dynamic candidates for the position, and we hope to announce the appointment of our new Educator soon.

As always, should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to call. And I look forward to seeing you on May 2 to thank and honor Rick for his devoted service over these last five years.

Very warmly,
Rabbi Joshua M. Davidson