

Erev Rosh Hashanah Address by President Pennie Meiselman, 5778/2017

L'SHANA TOVA

Thank you Rabbi Bloom for a beautiful service this evening. Thank you also to Student Cantor Geigerman, David Kimbel, our Music Director, Tom Tiehel, our accompanist and our wonderful HHD Choir.

When Alan and I moved here 9 years ago we knew we wanted to join Congregation Beth Yam and to be involved members.

So what did it take for me to become a part of the CBY Family? The answer is simple. When invited to participate I said yes. I said yes to dinner after Friday night Shabbat services. I said yes to being on the membership committee and yes to many projects both small and large. And now having said yes to serve as President of Congregation Beth Yam, I am encouraging you to say yes as well. So you can see how it feels to be an integral part of our beautiful congregation.

I believe that CBY is not only a congregation where we meet on Friday evenings for Shabbat services, but rather a community in which we can develop close friendships, a spiritual life, a place to participate in Tikun Olam-repairing the world.

We opened our door to our neighbor, The Church of Latter Day Saints when they could not find a temporary home on the Island. Together with our next door neighbor, All Saints Episcopal Church we created a Women's Prayer Service of Thanksgiving following Hurricane Matthew and now we are repeating this service after Irma. We look forward now to our Scholar in Residence program shared with Saint Francis By the Sea Catholic Church in November.

A community is a network of support and relationships. The more you take part, the more you build those relationships, the more connected you feel.

We are here to celebrate happy times and life cycle events, such as B'nai Mitzvahs, a new baby, weddings, significant anniversaries and we're also here to help and support each other in times of need.

Our sages say in Pirkey Avot, "Do not separate yourself from the community."

All of the programs and activities we offer would not be possible without our volunteers. They are committee chairs and committee members who are the backbone of our community. I thank each and everyone for their dedication and willingness to give so freely of their energy and talents. I would also like to thank at this time our High Holy Days chair people, Elaine Lust and Jack Miller along with David Kurjan, chair of the Ritual Committee, who choreograph these High Holy Days as smoothly as a fine ballet.

Hopefully you have read in The Tidings about our Acting Director of Jewish Youth Education, Denise Fitzgerald. Denise has a Bachelor of Science in Elementary Education and a Masters in

Special Education. I know our Religious School is in very capable hands and look forward to a successful year.

One of the highlights of the HHDs is hearing the sound of the shofar. Maimoneds says “Sleeping ones awoken from your sleep. Examine your deeds. Remember your creator.”

How fortunate we are to have a young man who grew up at Beth Yam blowing the Kleiman Shofar on these HHDs.

Here at CBY we have many opportunities to do good deeds. Join our growing list of volunteers and have the amazing experience of doing something good, selflessly for CBY.

In conclusion, we need to remind ourselves that our mission and values are not merely words on a piece of paper. They are living documents. A blueprint for what is important to us as a congregation.

By keeping our mission in mind, let us all work together to ensure that Congregation Beth Yam continues to thrive now and for generations to come.

On behalf of Alan, my family, both near and far, I wish everyone L'Shana Tova