

A synagogue serves many purposes, and in many ways, it is a house, a Bayit, that offers many opportunities to its community. It is of course known as a Beit Tefillah, a house of prayer, because people go there to pray as a congregation. It is also a Beit Knesset, a house of assembly, because people can assemble there for social and other non-religious activities. And it is, perhaps most importantly, a Beit Midrash, a house of study, because life-long learning is such a vital part of our traditions - we teach our children there thru our Hebrew School, and we teach ourselves there through adult education. This morning, we have created a true Bayit, a strong, viable and strong House, where prayer, community and education will serve as a beacon to the Jews of South County. And so we pray ...

Eloheynu, Velohey Avotenu – Our God and the God of our ancestors – we come to You today in joy and reflection, thanking You for the vision and fortitude that has made this merger possible. We express our collective appreciation for this opportunity to combine the best of two worlds – worship and education, which will lead to communal assembly. We are grateful to be able to reach this milestone, and to prove to all concerned that we can, in fact, achieve Shalom Bayit, a peaceful house. And, with Your continued care, love and protection, one day soon, we will be able to celebrate our traditions and heritage in Your new Bayit. And we will be able to echo the words of Theodore Herzl, who proclaimed – “Im Tirzu, Ein Zo Agada” – If you truly want it, it need not remain a dream.

May the force of the Temple and the vigor of the School allow us to truly go M'chayil L'chayil, from Strength to Strength, and to that, let us all say, Amen!