May we be blessed as we go on our way  
May we be guided in peace  
May we be blessed with health and joy  
May this our blessing, amen.

May we be sheltered by wings of peace  
May we be kept in safety and in love  
May grace and compassion find their  
way to every heart  
May this be our blessing, amen.

*-Debbie Friedman*

As I struggled with the sense of the passing of our Rabbi, this song keeps playing in my minds. Although I have always found it beautiful and would bring tears to my eyes everytime, it’s meaning became clear to me just this morning.

We are a Temple about to embark on a very challenging time – Transition. A congregation with the same leader for such a long time is unheard of. And now we need to find someone who will take the reins and start new in an established culture. Not an easy task.

Rabbi wanted to be known and remembered as a Teacher. A very humble role, that doesn’t pay much in any market, but one that brings more value than the highest paid CEO. The greatest gift we can give back to the Rabbi, and the incoming leadership, is to follow Rabbi Acrish’s teachings. Just to mention a few:

* To be open to trying new things – look at all the change that has occurred in our Temple just in the recent past:
  + Our TBE kids reading from the Torah on the High Holidays
  + TBE members blowing the Shofar
  + The variety of Shabbat services in an effort to touch the needs of our varied membership
  + And most recently, Rabbi Gold started a new tradition where at the Oneg we hold hands and a point in the circle, two members are touching the Challah as we recite the Hamozie. It was heartwarming.
* To find peace – Rabbi did not like conflict and would look for ways to find common ground. He would look for the good in people and asked that that be our focus so we could find resolution.
* To create a safe environment – You could see pain in the Rabbi’s face when I spoke of bullying especially to one of his TBE children and more so when he learned of it in our school. The Temple should be a place where members want to be and where they trust us with their children. The Temple should be a shelter from all harm.
* To be understanding and compassionate– People are different. Priorities are different. And we do not know what goes on in every home. You may not agree with someone’s choice but it is not our place to judge, but rather if they are reaching for help, we should be there for them.
* To bring joy each day – Even as he was planning to leave his Temple family, he smiled when we visited and made sure we left his presence feeling good. Even with his memorial service, he left us with a

*“People will forget what you said,*

*People will forget what you did,*

*But people will never forget how you made them feel.”*

* Maya Angelou

Let’s not forget how Rabbi made us feel.

Let’s follow his teachings and be open to new.

Let’s practice TikkunOlam here at our Temple and help each of us heal.

And let’s move forward to make Rabbi proud as he watches over his TBE family.