



October 14, 2016/ 12 Tishrei 5777

Dear Shir Tikvah:

Yom Kippur is my favorite day of the year! The liturgy, the music, the learning, the studying, the praying, the weeping, the community, the fast-all send my soul soaring! As darkness descended Wednesday night and we concluded Neilah with the final T'kiyah G'dolah of the shofar, I felt my heart propelled into the year ahead. Despite the long fast and the hunger pangs, being surrounded by you as we danced and sang Halleluyah, I felt more alive, more awake, more ready to enter the world than I did before. I can still feel the gorgeous music reverberating in my fingertips, and that first taste of sweet Kiddush wine on my tongue full of hope and promise: I can do better, I can be more compassionate, more loving in the year ahead. I can gather all the broken pieces and all the whole pieces and move into the world strong, vulnerable, alive.

Our prayer together, our spiritual work during Yom Kippur, is intended to be transformative. On this Shabbat, I invite each of us to reflect on the power of Yom Kippur:

How did our hearts open?

Where did we access the courage to forgive? To atone for our wrong-doing?

How will we commit to living as holier, healthier, more decent people in the year ahead?

How did the fast inspire us to repair the breach in our world and restore our community?

Where will we look to share our unique gifts with our community?

We come to shul and pray for an authentic experience: one that is alive and soul stirring, inspiring and challenging.

We hope you were able to glimpse something Divine these days of awe: be it in the mirror, the carpet, the tears of a loved one, or your own beautiful refection.

Moadim L'simcha~Wishing you a Season of Deep Joy,

Shabbat Shalom,

Michael