TEMPLE RODEF SHALOM

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SENIOR CANTOR
Michael A. Shochet

RABBI
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Dear Friends,

After 30 years of filling our community with music, prayer and meaning, Cantor Michael Shochet will retire from Temple Rodef Shalom on **June 30, 2028**. I receive this news with bittersweet feelings. I will miss his leadership and guidance, both musical and pastoral, and I am also very happy that he and Denise will be able to enjoy time together without the demands of clergy life.

Cantor Shochet was our first cantor, arriving in 1998. Stepping into a wide open field, he designed and led what our musical practice and tradition would become; his influence can be felt in our worship, the richness of our music, and the generations of members who have sung with and been inspired by him. A key measure of Cantor Shochet's impact is that we can't imagine our congregation without a cantor. What was new when he arrived has become fundamental to who we are, and his impact is immeasurable.

On Rosh Hashanah, I spoke in terms of years as millions of minutes. Cantor Shochet has been with us for nearly half of our history; by the time he retires, he will have shared more than 15 million minutes with us. And that isn't an ending. Cantor Shochet will continue his pioneering leadership as our first Cantor Emeritus. But first, we will honor and celebrate him and his career as we always have at moments of transition: together, as a community.

As we share the next two years together, we offer these words from our tradition: "*Chazak, Chazak, V'nitchazek* – From Strength to Strength, May we be Strengthened." The Executive Board has begun planning the search for a new senior cantor. Stay tuned for news of a search committee later this year. Part of the committee's work will be hosting a series of congregational conversations and other opportunities for you to share your thinking about how our senior cantor will lead us into the future. We'll keep you informed as these plans progress. Meanwhile, of course, we will continue to learn from Cantor Shochet and all of our outstanding clergy team.

On my own behalf, Mike, may you be blessed in all you do. And on behalf of a grateful congregation, thank you, Cantor Shochet.

Jeffrey Levy
President, Temple Rodef Shalom