



SHIRAS HATORAH - PHILLYKOLLEL BANQUET JAN 8, 2023

Yungeleit of the Philadelphia Community Kollel.

Philadelphia Community Kollel Hosts Shiras HaTorah

“When we sit and learn in the *kollel*, that is a song to the *Eibershter*, that is what gives *Hakadosh Baruch Hu* much delight!” This was the message of Rabbi Yechiel Biberfeld, *Rosh Kollel* of Philadelphia Community Kollel, delivered at the *kollel*’s 22nd Anniversary Dinner, themed “*Shiras HaTorah*.”

The event was truly a unique one, an amazing *kiddush Hashem*, at which over 400 people gathered for an electrifying and inspiring evening of singing and dancing for the honor of the Torah and those who learn it.

Rabbi Yoel Dovid Zeffren, Associate *Rosh Kollel*, explained how it came to be. “This year’s honorees, Rabbi Menashe Benedict and Mr. Meir Badush are both very energetic people who are very active in the *beis medrash* and in other *kollel* programs. They are people who exude *simchah* and get very excited about *limud haTorah* and about anything that can be done to get more people involved in learning. They are also both very musical, so Rabbi Biberfeld came up with the concept of creating a dinner that had a musical element to reflect the passion and excitement for *limud haTorah* and for a Torah way of life that they represent.”

The result was a magnificent event that celebrated the *simchas hachaim* that comes for people who live and learn Torah.

Planning of the evening’s program largely the result of the creativity of Rabbi Yosef Prupas, director of

community programming. The event was dedicated by Mr. and Mrs. Jeff Rosner, in memory of their beloved son, Yossi, *z”l*. Yossi’s recent untimely passing left the entire community aching, and a celebration involving Torah and song was so befitting as it spoke directly to his passions.

Rabbi Chaim Dov Goldschmidt, emcee, introduced Rabbi Biberfeld, who elaborated on the concept of *Shiras HaTorah*, and explained that when we learn Torah, we are giving tremendous pleasure to *Hakadosh Baruch Hu*. This is what gives Him the greatest delight.

Rabbi and Mrs. Menashe Benedict received the Chaver Tov Award. Rabbi Benedict, an alumnus of the *kollel*, is now working as director of Meor for Drexel University, yet remains intimately involved in learning and *harbotzas haTorah* at the *kollel*.

In accepting his award, Rabbi Benedict elaborated on the energy of Torah that emanates from the *kollel*. “The *shirah* that is pumping out of the *kollel*, that reverberates from the *kollel*, makes learning Torah and keeping *mitzvos* come alive...By the mere fact that the *kollel* is here, Judaism comes alive.”

Mr. Meir Badush, who was recognized as the guest of honor, comes to learn daily at the *kollel*. He is also active in promoting Sephardic life in Philadelphia, both at the Lower Merion Synagogue and at the *kollel*.

In accepting his award, Mr. Badush observed, “The Philadelphia Kollel *beis medrash* is the place to find people of all ages, all backgrounds and all walks of life come together



Mr. Meir Badush, guest of honor, receiving a collage of his family’s Rabbinic ancestors and mentors. (L-R): Rabbi Yosef Prupas, Rabbi Yoel Dovid Zeffren, Mr. Meir Badush, Rabbi Dov Goldschmidt and Rabbi Yechiel Biberfeld, *Rosh Kollel*.



Rabbi Yechiel Biberfeld dancing with Rabbi Menashe Benedict, Chaver Tov Awardee.

in the beautiful harmony of *Shiras Torah*. Thank you, Hashem, for giving me the opportunity to be part of this *makom Torah*.“

A highlight of the evening was the performance of three medleys, sung by the honorees themselves, together with singer Simcha Jacoby, accompanied by Mutty Miller on the keyboard.

The first medley was a pair of songs that had been written for the last two dinners. The second was a song written specifically for this affair by Mrs. Newhouse, a well-known song writer from Lakewood, which reflected the beauty of the *Shiras HaTorah* that emanates from the *kollel*’s *beis medrash*. Finally, in honor of the Sephardic heritage of Mr. Badush, and many of the *kollel*’s participants, a medley of Sephardic

niggunim was performed, sung by Mr. Badush and his brother, Rabbi Maimon Badush from Brooklyn.

Following the award presentation and the final medley, the assembled broke out in *leibidig* dancing, expressing their deep *simchah* in being part of this *makom Torah*. As Rabbi Zeffren related, “We had planned dancing for the end of the dinner, but the feeling in the room at this point of the program was so irresistible and powerful, that we started a *rikud* right then. The energy grew and grew, with many of the *yungeleit* and the *Rosh Kollel* dancing together and with community members and their *chavrusos*. The high level of *simchah* that was felt in the room was a manifestation of the *simchah* that people feel all year long when they are learning Torah at the *kollel*.”