Wonderful job Adam! We are so proud of you! Your dad and I are so impressed by the dedication you have shown in preparing for this special day. You have spent time each evening for many months reading and practicing and you should be very proud of yourself, too.

Isn’t it great to look out at the congregation and see so many friends and family? We are so happy to have everyone here with us to celebrate this wonderful occasion. It has been a lot of fun getting ready for today’s celebration. One of the best parts for me has been the chance to reflect back on the last 13 years – from the day you surprised us all by arriving about one month early to today when you stand eye-to-eye with me here on the Bimah. You are a pretty great kid and we feel lucky to be your parents.

To know you is to know that you think about sports pretty much non-stop. And not just one sport, but all of them – baseball, football, basketball, hockey, golf, tennis, wrestling, and I have even caught you watching rugby and track on TV. You also enjoy playing sports, and have a special knack for organizing your friends into all kinds of tournaments. You even have a foosball tournament organized for tonight at your party! Hang on to this ability to organize people and projects because that will come in handy as you grow up.

Being Jewish is also an important part of who you are. It is great to have so many of your school friends and friends from our neighborhood here with us. Being one of the few Jewish kids in our neighborhood has never seemed to bother you. In fact, you have always embraced it. In first grade, you brought matzo to school on Passover to share with your class and to tell them what the holiday means. You have brought dreidels in during Hanukkah and taught the dreidel game. Even this year, when your Global Studies class was discussing archeology, you brought in artifacts from our trip to Israel to share. Your sixth grade teacher told us how you even taught your friends how to write their names in Hebrew! Always be proud of who you are, even when it makes you different than everyone around you.

We are very thankful to be part of Temple David. We joined when you were in Kindergarten because it was important for us to raise our children in a community of faith. We wanted you and Sam to grow up feeling part of a group of people with shared values, beliefs, history and identity. Much like the community you spoke about in your D’vor Torah. Of course, your dad thought we would lay low, get you guys through Hebrew school, Bar Mitzvahs and that would be that. But then you become good friends with Micah Symons, the Rabbi’s son. And suddenly we are all on the radar!! And now your dad is in the Brotherhood and organizes the temple fantasy football league, I am a room parent and invited to sit on several committees, and even Sam is on Student Council!

So here we all are as a family – a part of a community of faith that has welcomed us, where we have learned together and helped each other and the community and where we have all made friends. You and Sam know this building inside and out and the importance of the objects and people within it. My hope is that you will always be part of a community that cares about you and that you care about.

We are thankful to all of the people who have dedicated themselves to making this community of Temple David a special place. Rabbi Barbara Symons leads us with enthusiasm, faith and understanding. The teachers and Mrs. Fisher in the Weiger School are committed to the kids and also very patient. Mrs. Bortz has tutored Bar and Bat Mitzvah students for over 30 years and we are thankful that you have been one of her students.

Adam, today you have made an important commitment to being part of not just Temple David, but to the whole Jewish community. This is something truly special that will always be a part of who you are, and it makes us very proud to be your parents. We love you! Mazel tov!