Origins of the Mizpah

Sadly, we cannot say with certainty when Beta Sigma Phi first began to use the Mizpah to end meetings. It was in very early times, when we didn't think to document things that would later become deep traditions. We don't even know where it came from, it was probably begun by the members themselves and spread throughout the organization in a very short time.

The Mizpah comes from The Bible. It is in Genesis 31:49. In The Bible it is an admonishment to warn that when Laban and Jacob are apart, they cannot break their covenant because even if no one is there to see it, God will be witness. Not exactly a blessing.

However, in Victorian times, the Mizpah came to be used as a blessing said when one person left another. It was used in jewelry and other medium throughout that time. It has remained in that meaning ever since and that is the meaning that Beta Sigma Phi attributes to The Mizpah when saying it at the end of a meeting after the Closing Ritual.

We use it to bless our sisters and to ask The Lord to watch over them when we cannot do it ourselves.