

The Hebrew Tabernacle

BNEI MITZVAH **HANDBOOK**

...At thirteen years of age, one begins to fulfill the
mitzvot – Mishna Avot 5:21...

Please read through this handbook and use it as a tool to familiarize yourself with the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* experience that is in your near future. The information contained herein is current for 2010, is reviewed annually, and is subject to change.

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INTRODUCTORY LETTER

Dear Friends,

This booklet contains information, which we trust will make the experience of your preparing to become *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* more meaningful and guide you through the process we follow here at the Hebrew Tabernacle. In order to set the context for it all, we want you to know what a wonderful experience a family's celebrating a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* can be. Our people have noted the journey of a Jewish child towards adulthood and for centuries have bestowed the occasion with great meaning and rituals.

The origins of a child becoming *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* are based on the emergence of a 13-year-old boy into legal adulthood. After a young man's thirteenth birthday he was able to read from the *Torah*, a legal right reserved only for adults. He was also legitimately counted as part of a *minyan*, was encouraged to marry, earn a living and raise a family. Though girls were not afforded the right to read from *Torah*, they were granted legal rights of maturity at age twelve.

While we realize that becoming *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* no longer has legal impact, the occasion still contains a tremendous affirmation of continuity in the Jewish community. We look forward to discussing the meaning of *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* when we meet over the course of your preparations.

We attach great importance to these celebrations and take seriously both the preparation and the commitments we ask of our students. No one would expect to end his/her formal secular education at age 13; neither should we think of this process as an end. Rather, becoming an acknowledged son or daughter of our people is just the beginning to a lifetime of Jewish learning. It would not be fair to expect adults to function well with a 13-year-old's knowledge of Judaism; the most difficult religious issues need ever-greater maturity for discussion. Please be assured that we and your Ritual Committee mentor will work closely with you to answer questions you may have and that during the process of a child's preparation, your family will meet privately with the Rabbi. **Please be aware, the clergy and the Hebrew Tabernacle are empowered to postpone any *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* if we feel that the requirements stated in this handbook have not been met to our satisfaction.**

The following pages provide a road map both to the schedule and to the people you can contact if you have questions. Of course, please feel free to contact the Rabbi for counsel or guidance at any point along the way.

We look forward to a wonderful and rewarding family celebration.

Jeffrey Gale
Rabbi

Michelle Rubel
Cantorial Intern

WHAT IS A BAR/BAT MITZVAH?

Sons and daughters are given to us that we may care for them and help them grow. Care and sustenance are not just physical, but include hope and faith. In this sense, parents are partners with God in the creating of life and in giving meaning and value to it. Jewish parents are teachers too - they want their children to learn the meaning of life and to feel the presence of God. This is the purpose of Jewish education; children joining as partners with parents in passing down our Jewish heritage. To stop growing is to stop living. Jewish education is the means by which the spirit of the individual is helped to grow and mature.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah, meaning “son/daughter of the commandments,” cannot claim ancient origins. There is not a hint of it in the *Torah*, but the *Talmud* says that 13 is the age “for the fulfillment of the commandments”. Children were denied the privilege of observing the commandments until they were 13, and so these became the central features of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* observance.

The actual ceremony of becoming a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is included in the ritual of a regular community service in which *Torah* is read. The student shows that he/she is prepared to take on responsibilities in Jewish life when he/she reads from *Torah* and leads the congregation in worship, thus demonstrating his/her learning and familiarity with our tradition. The religious service is a central feature of the occasion. So too is the responsibility each Jew takes on at the age of thirteen. Becoming a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* bestows no magical and instant transformation. At age 13 our children are still children, and will remain so for years to come. A *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* celebrates the process of becoming a Jewish adult committed to observing *mitzvot*. It takes guidance from parents and many years of learning to accomplish this goal. But it is a goal within the reach of our children and one worth striving for.

In earlier times, the celebration of this occasion took place in the student’s home where a modest meal was served after the service in the synagogue. With the passage of time, the festive family meal grew into a party, and sometimes banquets were held in public halls. We encourage dignified celebrations, so that the festivities will not dwarf the religious significance.

The Hebrew School, Rabbi, Cantor, mentors, and tutors appointed by the Cantor provide the preparation, but the parents’ help is essential. Parents should motivate their children properly for study, encourage excellence in their activities, attend worship services with their child, and arrange the celebration itself in accordance with the religious spirit of the occasion. While a student is studying for this important religious life cycle event, parents should take to heart their own obligations as Jews. Likewise, parents should never give students an indication that *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is the end of their religious education. In essence, it is only the beginning.

“At every stage in life, in personality and character development, at which a person is beginning to search for his or her own unique, personal, individual identity, Judaism had the genius to distinguish that person by name, call that person by name out of the congregation. We call the person by their Hebrew name as well, linking Jewish identity with personal identity and with a sense of wider purpose: with a community beyond the individual self. We link this sacred Jewish observance with family, with life, with expressions of congratulations and appreciation for the child, and provide the person with a sense of self worth.

Let us show by the way we celebrate *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, by the dignity, the beauty, and the warmth of the observance, as we practice it, that we, too, are continuing in the way of the best of our ancestors going back to Abraham and Sarah. Ours is the task of restoring and maintaining the true luster to this jewel of ours in the treasure of Judaism.” – Rabbi Herbert Bronstein, *Bar Mitzvah and Idolatry*

RITUAL INFORMATION

HONORS: SHABBAT EVE

Candle lighting. It is customary at Hebrew Tabernacle for one representative of the community to kindle the Shabbat lights on Friday evening. A member of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah's* family may have this honor. If the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* has a younger sibling, he/she may accompany an adult to the *bimah* for this honor or the whole family can light the candles together. The honoree will be expected to read the introduction to the candle lighting in English, light the candles, recite the blessing in Hebrew and then read another short passage in English.

OPTIONAL PARTS IN THE SHABBAT EVE SERVICE

The *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is not required to participate in the Shabbat Eve Service. However, we strongly encourage the family to attend this service. If the student wishes to do so, he/she may:

- Lead the congregation in the blessing over the wine (*Kiddush*) and / or the *challah* (*motzi*).

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family is strongly encouraged to attend the Friday evening service. Please invite your out-of-town guests to attend services with you.

STUDENT'S ROLE IN THE SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE

At the service when a child becomes *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, he/she will do the following:

- Recite the blessing for donning a *tallit*.
- Chant at least 12 verses from the *Torah*.
- Chant at least the first and last line of the *Haftarah* in Hebrew and read the rest of the *Haftarah* in English.
- Chant the associated blessings over the *Torah* and *Haftarah* in Hebrew.
- Deliver a *d'var Torah* (teaching) related to the *parashah*.

While these are minimal requirements for which every student should strive, there should be recognition that there are special needs students who might require a modification of these requirements. The decision to modify should rest on the shoulders of the Rabbi, Cantor, and Religious School principal.

OPTIONAL PARTS IN THE SHABBAT MORNING SERVICE

As always, we encourage our students to not only meet their requirements, but to surpass them as well. Some students choose to go beyond what is required of them in the service. Here are examples of how previous *B'nei Mitzvah* have enhanced their participation:

- Assist the Rabbi and Cantor in leading all or part of the liturgy in the Torah Service.
- Carry the Torah Scroll during the *hakafah*. (We have scrolls of different sizes to accommodate the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah's* physical strength).
- Chant more than twelve verses in the *Torah*. (maximum: 7 *aliyot* or 21 verses)
- Lead the *Chatzi Kaddish* before *Hagbah*.
- Chant more than just the beginning and end of their *Haftarah* in Hebrew.
- Lead the congregation in *kiddush* and/or *motzi* after services.

HONORS: SHABBAT MORNING

Anyone who has an honor on the *bimah* must wear a *tallit* (only Jews should wear the *tallit*) and **be appropriately dressed** for the occasion. This is in keeping with our *minhag* here at Hebrew Tabernacle. **Honorees who are inappropriately dressed may be refused an honor, at the Rabbi's discretion.**

Aliyot. There are at least four, and a maximum of seven, *Torah* honors called *aliyot* (plural of *aliyah*). Family and friends may have the honor of at least two of them. One *aliyah*, often the penultimate one, is reserved for the previous Hebrew Tabernacle *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, and the last one is reserved for the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. Each *aliyah* involves honorees chanting the blessings before and after the *Torah* reading in Hebrew. Transliteration is available as an aid for people who know the blessings but are unsure of the Hebrew letters. If requested, the Cantor, your mentor, or your tutor can provide help with the blessings as a learning tool or as a refresher if it has been a while since someone's last *aliyah*. *Aliyot* may go to anyone Jewish who is *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* whom the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* family seeks to honor. Honorees often include, but are not limited to: grandparents, parents, older siblings, aunts, uncles, and cousins. Please be aware that there may need to be *aliyot* for other members of the Hebrew Tabernacle congregation who are receiving special blessings on that day. This in no way affects the number of *aliyot* your family will receive.

The customary order is: 1) Relatives, 2) Parents, 3) *Previous Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, 4) *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.

It is common custom that the parents and close relatives of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* receive *aliyot*. Those receiving *aliyot* should be familiar enough with the blessings to recite them fluently. The *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* tutors will usually review the *Torah* blessings with the parents, and the mentors can help as well. Parents, please remember that you, your other children, and your guests should be as prepared as the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* for their roles in the day's events.

Ba'al Koreh. If there is another member of your family or friend who would like to read *Torah*, in addition to the twelve verses chanted by the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, arrangements can be made to do so with the Cantor.

Opening/Closing the Ark Curtain. The honor of opening and closing the ark curtain can be given to family and friends. As many as two people can have this honor per opening. The ark is opened before the *Torah* service, and again when it is being returned. The honorees will be called up by name by the Rabbi. They do not need to be Jewish; however, only Jewish honorees should wear a *tallit*.

Hagbah. After the *Torah* is read, we recite the *Chatzi Kaddish*, and then we lift the *Torah* to display it to the congregation. This ritual is not easy; therefore we only allow individuals who have performed this ritual before to do *hagbah*. If you would like a member of your family who has not done this before to do so, they must make an appointment with the Rabbi, Cantor, tutor, or Ritual Committee member to learn how to do so properly. A "rookie" can only perform this ritual with their approval. On certain dates in the Jewish calendar, we read from two separate *Torah* scrolls; therefore we may need two individuals to perform this task.

Important: Beginning in September, 2010:

Due to unpleasant experiences in the past, the Ritual Committee now requires that guests doing *Hagbah* be certified by the Rabbi or Cantor just prior to the service. The *magbiah*

(male) or *magbimah* (female) must demonstrate their ability to lift the *Torah* at 10 am (the service starts at 10:15). If the *magbiah/magbimah* fails to demonstrate ability, or does not show up at 10 am, a “regular” from the congregation will be assigned to do *Hagbah*.

Glilah. After *bagbah*, the ritual dressing of the *Torah* takes place. Up to two people may have this honor, one of whom is *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. As stated above, on certain dates we have two *Torah* scrolls to read from, therefore, on those occasions, four individuals can have the honor of *Glilah*.

Motzi. Following services, if the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is not doing the blessing over the bread him/herself, a member of the family may do so. Traditionally, this honor has been given to a grandparent.

HONORS FOR THE PARENTS

Aliyah. See the section on “*Aliyot*” above. Parents almost always choose to have an *aliyah* for themselves out of the allotted *aliyot*.

Baruch Sheptarani. There is a traditional parents blessing over the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. It consists of one brief line of Hebrew and English. Here at Hebrew Tabernacle, we have added this prayer to a more expanded Parents’ Blessing. There are several versions of this blessing to choose from; choose the one that best represents your family. This blessing can be read by one or both parents.

HONORS FOR NON-JEWISH FAMILY MEMBERS

We encourage family members to participate in Shabbat services as an important way for the student becoming a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* to honor those whose love has brought him/her to this milestone. We recognize that some of these family members may not be Jewish, and that their support has been no less instrumental in guiding the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* toward this day. Therefore, we seek to include non-Jewish parents and relatives in the celebration in meaningful ways. Our policy at the Hebrew Tabernacle is that non-Jews may not perform the honors listed above with two exceptions. A non-Jewish parent may read the *Baruch Sheptarani* blessing and non-Jewish family and friends may open/close the ark curtains. While non-Jews may not have the other honors listed above, they may accompany a Jewish family member or friend up to the *bimah* during an honor. We ask that non-Jews not wear a *tallit* if they are ascending the *bimah*. Please speak with the clergy for other ways in which a non-Jewish family member can be involved on the day of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.

TORAH SERVICE OVERVIEW

The *Torah* is our most sacred possession. It is for that reason that the *Torah* Service is the focal point of the Shabbat Morning Service. Reading *Torah* publicly is a ritual that goes back as far as Ezra the Scribe (5th Century BCE). Over the thousands of years since Ezra’s time, an intricate set of textual readings, blessings, prayers and choreographies have been added to the *Torah* Service. It is crucial that the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* become very familiar with all of the parts of *Torah* Service – even if parts of it will be led by others. If a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* and his/her family are not familiar with the *Torah* Service it will show on the big day. To help familiarize you, here is an overview of the *Torah* Service:

- After the *Amidah*, the Rabbi will announce that we are about to begin the *Torah* service. At this point the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* and those honored with opening/closing the ark will be called to come up to the *bimah*.
- After a brief introduction by the Rabbi, the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* will then recite the blessing over the *tallit* and put on the *tallit*.
- The clergy and others will then ascend to the ark, and the ark will be opened. The prayers that precede the reading of the *Torah* will then take place. Facing the ark, a few separate prayers will be said. Then the scroll(s) will be taken from the ark and handed to whoever will be carrying them during the *hakafah*. The *Shema* and other prayers will then be recited.
- After all of those prayers are finished, the *hakafah* will descend the upper *bimah*, walk around the Sanctuary and return to the lower *bimah*.
- At this point the reading of the *Torah* will begin. Each *oleh* (*olah* for a woman) will be called to the *Torah* by their Hebrew name (if they have one). They will recite the blessing before the *Torah* reading. The *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* or other reader will then chant verses from the *Torah*. When the reader is finished, the *oleh/olah* will then recite the blessing for after the reading of the *Torah*. If the *oleh/olah* would like one, the Cantor will then recite a *Mi Shebeirach* for the *oleh/olah* and if desired (and told about it ahead of time) an *El Maleh Rachamim* prayer. This prayer is an excellent opportunity to remember those who are no longer alive that would have been proud to be at the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. The *oleh/olah* stays on the *bimah* until the next *oleh/olah* concludes. This process will repeat for each *oleh/olah*.
- Prior to the last *aliyah*, the Cantor will chant a *Mi Shebeirach* for the sick. Then the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* will officially be called to the *Torah* for his/her own *aliyah* (even though he/she will have already been reading from the *Torah*). Following the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah's* *aliyah*, a special *Mi Shebeirach* will be said for the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.
- The people doing *hagbah* and *gilah* will be called up to the *bimah*. While they are on their way to the *bimah*, the *Chatzki Kaddish* will be chanted. Then the *Torah* will be lifted and dressed. When they are finished dressing the *Torah*, it will be put on a stand on the *bimah*.
- The *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* will be introduced to read the *haftarah* and its blessings.
- The *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* will then deliver his/her *d'var Torah*.
- The Rabbi will deliver a few words to the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* and the congregation.
- The parents of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* will be invited to the *bimah* to recite the *Baruch Sheptarani* blessing.
- The *Torah* is returned to the ark. If *Rosh Chodesh* will occur in the coming week, an additional blessing over the new moon is inserted. There is optionally a second *hakafah* before the *Torah* is returned.
- After the ark is closed and the congregation seated, a member of the Board of Trustees of the Hebrew Tabernacle will offer a few words to our *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* and will deliver some gifts on the congregation's behalf. The congregation will be led in singing *Siman Tov U'mazal Tov* as candy (See: *Chiddur Mitzvah*) is thrown at the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.
- Once the congregation's children have collected the candy, the service will continue with concluding prayers. The *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* may return to his/her seat at this time.

EDUCATION

REQUIREMENTS

While technically anyone who is thirteen years of age has achieved the status of *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, there are many requirements to become one in modern times. As you have read already, there is much that will need to be prepared for the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* service. However, if a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is to truly become responsible for his/her own Jewish observance, he/she must be educated in order to make good decisions. Listed below are the education requirements that need to be fulfilled. We have an excellent Hebrew School at the Hebrew Tabernacle and these requirements can be met there. We understand that not everyone has been at the Hebrew Tabernacle long enough to achieve these requirements in our school. Therefore, if a student has learned the equivalent material in a qualified school setting or approved tutorial, he/she **may be** exempted from some or all of the requirements. **Only the Rabbi and Hebrew School Principal will determine who is exempt from requirements. Do not assume that if you have made arrangements that do not include our school that you will be exempted.** Students who join the religious school later than the fifth grade may require additional tutoring in Hebrew beyond that offered by the Hebrew School. Students **must** fulfill all Hebrew School requirements, including regular attendance, participation, and completion of work.

Each student is required to attend three years of Hebrew School at the Hebrew Tabernacle: *kitab hay* (5th grade), *kitab vav* (6th grade) and *kitab zayin* (7th grade).

CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

- *Kitab hay* will focus on topics in Jewish history as well as the ethical *mitzvot* as learned through studying the biblical prophets. As always, Hebrew will be integrated into the curriculum.
- *Kitab vav* focuses on the prayer book, the meaning of the prayers and the structures of the various services. This work is done in both Hebrew and English and is an excellent way for a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* to familiarize him/herself with the service.
- *Kitab zayin* is specifically designed to dovetail with the preparations for and experience of *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. Issues relating to what it means to be a Jewish adult, to be responsible for ones Judaism and what it means to be a part of the Jewish community once one has achieved the status of *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* are discussed at length.

REQUIREMENTS FOR BECOMING *BNEI MITZVAH* AT THE HEBREW TABERNACLE

- **Membership.** *Bnei Mitzvah* is only open to members in good standing of the Hebrew Tabernacle. All outstanding balances, unless on an otherwise pre-arranged payment plan, must be paid in full before the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* date. Similarly, a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* date may only be scheduled by families in good financial standing.
- **Faith.** It is understood that all students who are becoming *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* at the Hebrew Tabernacle are raised solely in the Jewish tradition.
- **Fees.** A *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* fee of \$250 must be received no later than one month prior to the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. This fee includes the cost of the accompanist, our standard Shabbat *oneg* on Shabbat morning, as well as candy to be thrown at the service.
- **Service Attendance.** Students are expected to attend services at the Hebrew Tabernacle twenty (20) times in the two years prior to their *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. These 20 services **must be** Shabbat Morning Services. While the student may attend these services alone, we strongly encourage the whole family to come so that our style of services will be familiar to your whole family on the day of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. The whole family is required to attend at least two Shabbat Morning Services in the months leading up to the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. In order to keep track of attendance, each time you attend a Shabbat Morning Service, you should ask the Rabbi for a blue “Service Card.” There are no excuses for not having 20 “Service Cards” by your *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* – there are 104 *Shabbatot* in the two years leading up to your *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.
- **Shul-Hopping.** Students are expected to “*shul*-hop” ten (10) times in the two years before their *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. These services need to be Shabbat Morning Services as well. You may wish to visit a variety of synagogues: Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, Reconstructionist, Ashkenazi, Sephardic, etc... After each visit, you need to fill out a “*Shul*-Hop Form.” On it are several questions designed to help you reflect on your experience at these synagogues. Your mentor will collect these periodically when they meet with you.
- **Mitzvah/Community Service Project.** Since each student is about to become responsible for the *mitzvot* for him/herself, they will be expected to begin taking on the responsibility of the *mitzvot* now. In the two years leading up to his or her *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, each student will be required to do fifteen (15) hours of community service. This community service project can be at the Hebrew Tabernacle, or at another agency. This project can also be something you do alone. Regardless, your project needs to be approved by the Rabbi or your mentor. Upon the completion of your project, you will be expected to hand in a typewritten summary of your experience. For helpful hints and ideas see the appendix.
- **Photograph/Biography.** You need to provide a picture of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* (digital or snapshot) along with a short personal history, to be published in the bi-monthly bulletin. These must be received by the first of the month before the publishing date (i.e. if your *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is February 10th, you need to have your picture and biography in by December 1st so it is in time for the January-February bulletin deadline). Send the picture to editor@hebrewtabernacle.org if digital or send them to the Hebrew Tabernacle office: *attention editor.*
- **Advance Notice.** Please get us the names (English and Hebrew) of anyone who will be participating in the service one month in advance. There is an Honors sheet in the Appendix that you can fill out and submit to the Rabbi or Cantor.

- **Reciprocation**. The *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is required to have an *aliyah* at the next *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, so put it in your calendar now. Also, your family will usher at the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* before yours, so please put those dates on your calendar as well.

ABOUT THE *BNEI MITZVAH* PROCESS

SETTING THE DATE

By the beginning of the student's year in *kitab vav*, your family should receive a *Bnei Mitzvah* Registration Form. This form, in the Appendix, needs to be filled out in order to receive a date and to have a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* at the Hebrew Tabernacle. Dates are assigned on a first come, first served basis, and we attempt to assign them close to the student's thirteenth birthday. The Clergy and the Ritual Committee Chair of the Hebrew Tabernacle have final say on the dates assigned. Failure to meet any of the requirements delineated in this handbook may result in the date being taken off the calendar.

BNEI MITZVAH MEETING

In September, the families of the *Kita Vav* students will attend a *Bnei Mitzvah* meeting. All students and parents are required to attend. The Rabbi, Cantor, Hebrew School Principal, Mentors and the Ritual Committee Chair will all be present to answer any questions you might have about the months and years to come.

CLERGY MEETINGS

Seven months before the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*, the student and his/her parents will have their first meeting with the Rabbi and the Cantor. At this meeting, a timetable for the rest of the preparation period will be laid out. **Please bring whatever family calendars are needed to this meeting.** The Rabbi will assign reading materials to be completed by the next meeting with the Rabbi.

The Cantor will schedule a meeting six months prior with the student, the parents and the tutor. Between four and four and a half months before the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* the student and the Cantor will meet one on one for a check-up on the student's progress. A similar meeting will occur two months before the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. On the same day, the Cantor and student will meet with the family and the Rabbi in order to discuss honors and music at the service. Three weeks before the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* there will be another check-up, one on one with the Cantor. This meeting will include a reading from the *Torah* scroll. There will also be two rehearsals, which will take place in the Sanctuary (see below).

The Rabbi will typically meet with the student again three months prior to the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* – as well as: two months prior, one month prior and two weeks prior. The purpose of these meetings is two-fold: first, the Rabbi and student will work closely together on the student's *d'var Torah*, and, second the Rabbi and the student will discuss the significance of reaching the status of *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. In addition, the parents will need to schedule a meeting with the Rabbi, without the student to discuss the parental role in this process. This meeting should take place two months – 6 weeks before the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.

While the clergy are often available for additional meetings, please be aware that both the Rabbi and Cantor are part-time. We are fully aware that while this will be a joyous occasion, getting there can cause considerable stress and difficulty. We are happy to work with you to alleviate any issues along the way. Likewise, if your family requires us to start this process earlier than seven months prior, we are happy to do so.

TUTORING

Only Hebrew Tabernacle approved tutors may be used for the primary tutoring. The clergy, in consultation with the tutor, will determine the materials to be covered. Tutoring begins six months prior to the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* and will occur weekly throughout the six months. **Each family is responsible for paying the tutor's fees; the Hebrew Tabernacle does not provide free tutoring.** This being said, the clergy are available for extra sessions above and beyond the tutor's visits if the clergy deem it necessary.

If there are special needs, we have tutors who deal specifically with special needs students. In addition, the tutoring may begin earlier than six months prior to the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.

REHEARSALS

There will be two rehearsals in the weeks before the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. These will be scheduled at the meeting seven months before the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. The Cantor will conduct these rehearsals, though the Rabbi may be there as well. At these rehearsals, the student will practice chanting their *Torah* portion from the *Torah* scroll, chant their *haftarah*, chant the blessings over the *Torah* and *haftarah*, practice delivering his/her *d'var Torah* as well as rehearse any parts of the *Torah* Service which the student will be leading. By this point the *d'var Torah* should be in its final form. Please bring the *tallit* and *kippah* that you will be wearing at the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* to each rehearsal.

Nervousness at these rehearsals is very normal. You may wish to schedule more rehearsals to make you feel better – that is just fine! If the Cantor deems more rehearsals necessary, you will need to make yourself available. It is helpful if one parent can be at each rehearsal; your encouragement while they are practicing can make all the difference in the world.

HIDDUR MITZVAH

A *mitzvah* is a commandment; something we must do. Beyond our need to complete *mitzvot*, our tradition encourages us to imbue each *mitzvah* with an aspect of beauty. Beautifying a *mitzvah* is called *hiddur mitzvah*. For instance, we don't just build a *sukkah*, we decorate it; or we don't just put eight candles on a piece of wood, we have a nice *chanukiah*. There are many aspects of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* that can be beautified. Examples are listed below. We encourage *hiddur mitzvah*, however, we ask that in your attempt to make something beautiful you do not make the day about the beauty. The focus should always be on the *Shabbat* service and the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah's* participation in it, not his/her clothes or the lavishness of the party afterward.

FLOWERS

The Hebrew Tabernacle does not provide flowers for *B'nei Mitzvah*. Many families choose to purchase flowers for the *bimah* in order to enhance the beauty of the Sanctuary. Other families also order flowers for the tables in the social hall for the *oneg* afterwards. If you order flowers, we ask that you have them delivered Friday afternoon and not on *Shabbat* – they will be just fine the next morning. Separate flowers may be ordered for any additional celebrations you may be hosting in our building. As with all aspects of the day, please do not overdo the flowers. Please let the office know about any deliveries. The office can also help you select a florist.

KIPPOT AND TALITOT

The Hebrew Tabernacle does have *kippot* available for worshippers in our Sanctuary. However, if you are having a large amount of guests, you may wish to order *kippot* as we do not have large quantities. When ordering *kippot*, we ask that you order enough for the worshippers we expect that day and that the *kippot* be something that every worshipper would be comfortable wearing. These *kippot* may be personalized on the inside. Your child's favorite color may be hot pink, but it is not likely that we would all wish to wear a *kippah* that color. The Rabbi and the Cantor are not expected to wear *kippot* other than their own.

Talitot are available in our sanctuary for all worshippers. We have many, but if you are expecting a large crowd you may want to encourage your guests to bring their own. We would welcome your buying additional *talitot*, but they are expensive to buy in large quantities. Both you and the congregation could better spend the money.

It is part of our *minhag* for the student to don a *tallit* as part of the service. The student is welcome to use one of the ones we have in the Sanctuary. However, we encourage each family to get one for the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. Many families give the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* a *tallit* that has been handed down in the family while others purchase one that matches the student's personality. The student can be involved in picking out the *tallit* or it can be a surprise gift.

PROGRAMS

It has become *minhag* at the Hebrew Tabernacle for the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* family to put together a program for the service. In the program you may want to include: a summary of the texts to be read, explanation of certain rituals and objects, the major players involved as well as those being honored. Examples of previous programs can be obtained from the Hebrew Tabernacle office. For help with ideas and publication of the program we recommend you contact Janet McDowell of Mitzvah Graphics, at mitzvah_graphics@earthlink.net.

CANDY

It is a tradition to throw candy at the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* at the conclusion of their efforts. It adds to the sweetness of the occasion. Please follow these simple rules, so that this happy event does not get out of hand. We will provide the candy; please do not bring your own. **The ushers are responsible for making sure the candy gets handed out in an appropriate manner.** Please do not throw the candy until the Rabbi has given the okay to do so. Your child will likely wish to throw some of the candy back. One or two is OK, but please don't let it get out of hand. Please remind your child that he or she is now an adult according to Jewish law and must act accordingly. After all the candy has been thrown, the Rabbi will invite all the children up to the *bimah* to collect it.

TZNIUT - MODESTY

Our tradition teaches that one should try to wear fine clothes on Shabbat, for it is written (Isaiah 58:13) "and you shall honor," which is interpreted by the Rabbis to mean that the garments worn on Shabbat shall not be the same as those worn on weekdays. We recognize that standards for dress have become somewhat less formal than in previous generations. Still, it is our expectation that worshippers of all ages will come to services dressed in a manner reflecting "*hiddur mitzvah*." Specifically, jeans, sweatshirts, t-shirts, baseball caps, short skirts, bare midriffs, shorts and similar dress are not appropriate. Please encourage your guests to stay within these guidelines. **As mentioned above, honorees may not be allowed to perform their honor if inappropriately dressed.**

PROPER DECORUM AT SERVICES

Sadly, we sometimes have problems with decorum, especially among our younger guests and school friends, though at times among adult guests as well. In order to maintain the dignity and sacredness of the service, we hope that you will explain to your guests the importance of quiet during services. Ushers are instructed to ask guests who do not maintain proper decorum to leave the Sanctuary. If disruptive behavior continues, the service will be halted.

Children are not allowed to leave the Sanctuary without an accompanying adult. If you have young guests who are coming without parental supervision, they are your responsibility. These unaccompanied children must sit on the ground floor of the Sanctuary, they may not sit in any of the balconies.

CELL PHONES AND BEEPERS

All cell phones and beepers are to be powered off during services while in the Sanctuary. This also means no texting or web browsing during the service.

PHOTOGRAPHY

Photographs may **NOT** be taken in the Sanctuary during services. Family photographs may be taken in the Sanctuary either before or after the service, but if performed before, must be completed by 9:45 am. Lights and flash may be used at that time. Pulpit furniture may **NOT** be moved for the purpose of photographs.

Photographs may be taken at the *oneg* reception after services. Photographers must cooperate with the clergy and our staff regarding all matters. Friends and family members must comply with these rules as well.

KAVOD – RESPECT

So that the feelings of each member of the *B'nei Mitzvah* class are respected, we ask that each member of the class be invited to any party you may be hosting in conjunction with the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.

VIDEOGRAPHY

It is the policy of the Hebrew Tabernacle that **NO** videographers are permitted to take video during services. The same rules apply to videography as they do to photography. Again, friends and family members must comply with these rules as well.

APPLAUSE

Services are sacred time and the Sanctuary is a sacred space. Therefore, what you are witnessing is a religious rite, not a performance. There is no clapping permitted in the Sanctuary during services.

USHERING

The *minhag* at Hebrew Tabernacle is that the entire family of the next Bar/Bat Mitzvah usher at the service of the current *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. All ushers should be dressed the same way they would dress at their own child's *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. Ushering guidelines are in the appendix.

INVITATIONS

Your invitations should invite your guests to be at the Shabbat Morning services in the Sanctuary promptly at 10:00 am. Services will actually start at 10:15 am to accommodate the inevitable latecomers. Friday Eve Services in the Sanctuary start promptly at 7:30 pm (except for family services which begin at 6:30 pm). If you will be hosting a luncheon or other event after the *oneg* in the Social Hall, or elsewhere following services, this should be included on your invitation. **There will be no announcements made from the *bimah* concerning private family celebrations.**

ONEG

The Hebrew Tabernacle presents a modest congregational *oneg* at the conclusion of services. You and your guests are welcome participants, you have sponsored the *oneg* with your *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* Fee. The *oneg* consists of wine, juice, *challah*, and cookies. If you would like to sponsor a more elaborate *oneg*, or make it a full lunch, we can help you make those arrangements. Please contact our office for more information. Any enhancements to the *oneg* must be available to all of the worshippers. If you would like a separate event for your guests only, you will have to wait until all of the worshippers have left the building. Even if you are planning an outside event, your family is expected to be at the *oneg*.

Outside caterers are acceptable provided they follow our *kasbrut* rules. If meat will be served at the luncheon, it must be kosher, and dairy products may not be served at the same meal, including desserts and milk for coffee. If it is a dairy affair, no *heksber* is needed.

Note that you will not be able to set up the Social Hall tables in advance. Fort Tryon Jewish Congregation has services in the Social Hall. They will conclude services before we do, and in that time, the maintenance men and caterers will quickly set up the tables for the luncheon. Please work out special setup instructions for the tables with the caterers.

Deliveries must not interfere with services on either Shabbat Eve or Shabbat Morning. Please give a gratuity to the building staff for any extra cleanup and setup they may be doing.

It is OK for a pianist or trio to play during the *oneg*/luncheon. However, there may not be a party with loud music during Shabbat. Evening parties (with loud music) may begin after 6 pm on Saturday.

BOOKING AN EVENT

If you wish to hold your own special private non-congregational event, you will need to contact our office. Additional fees and arrangements may be necessary and should be made as soon as possible in order to avoid a calendar conflict. If you are planning on having a party with a band, DJ, or other loud music and activities that may be inappropriate for Shabbat, your event can begin no earlier than 6pm on a Saturday evening.

CELEBRATE THROUGH TZEDAKAH: GIFTS OF TIME AND RESOURCES

It is traditional in synagogue life for Jews to express their gratitude through charitable gifts, to share the joy of their own celebration with those in need. *Tzedakah*, often defined as “charity,” more accurately means “justice.” *Tzedakah* can be donated in the form of time and money. Both gifts are sacred and therefore very important.

The synagogue depends on the charitable support of its members. A child’s becoming a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* is a wonderful time to demonstrate such support through a charitable gift to the synagogue. Donations to the Hebrew Tabernacle are responsible for a large percentage of our annual budget. Donations can go to a variety of funds, offsetting a multitude of costs for the congregation. We invite *Bnei Mitzvah* families to contribute what they can.

We are often asked how a family can demonstrate their appreciation to the clergy. The Rabbi has a charitable Discretionary Fund to which donations can be made, as does the Hebrew School Principal.

Now that they are adult members of the Jewish community, *Bnei Mitzvah* should be encouraged to volunteer their time at the Hebrew Tabernacle. Our congregation functions because the members of the congregation volunteer in a variety of ways, our young adult members are as crucial as any other. Like other adult, they may be asked to be on committees, participate in *shivah minyans*, perform *aliyot*, usher and much more.

All adult Jews, our *Bnei Mitzvah* included, are responsible for *tikkun olam*, repairing the world. Therefore, though there is no post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah community service requirement, we strongly encourage you to continue to serve the community at large.

If you would like suggestions of charities which could use your time and/or your money, please consult with the Rabbi.

GLOSSARY

We do not like to assume that every family is familiar with all the terms that may be used in this process. Therefore, we are listing some words below that are associated with the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* ceremony.

Aliyah: literally “going up;” the blessings before and after the *Torah* readings; it is an honor to be invited to recite these blessings.

Amidah: literally “standing;” the central section of the service which is traditionally read standing.

Baal Koreh: literally “master of reading;” the name for anyone who reads from the *Torah* scroll.

Baruch Sheptarani: literally “Blessed be the One who separated;” traditionally the blessing that released parents from being punished because of their child’s actions. Nowadays it has come to be a blessing marking the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* has completed their goal.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah: literally translated as “Son/Daughter of the Commandment,” more accurately understood as “commanded one.” Figuratively, it means the age of responsibility.

Bimah: the pulpit or raised area at the front of the sanctuary.

Bnei Mitzvah: more than one *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. Used when referring to more than one child.

Challah: the ritual bread which is blessed in Jewish meals and ceremonies.

Chanukiah: the special lamp that is lit during the holiday of Chanukah.

Chatzi Kaddish: literally a “half *kaddish*,” the prayer between two sections of the service.

D’var Torah: literally “a word of *Torah*,” a teaching or expounding on a *Torah* text.

El Maley Rachamim: literally “God, Master of Compassion;” it is the traditional memorial prayer.

Glilah: literally “the act of rolling up;” the act of rolling up and dressing the *Torah* after it has been read.

Haftarah: the portion from the biblical Prophets or Writings that is read after the reading of the *Torah*.

Hagbah: literally “lifting;” the act of lifting the *Torah* so the congregation can see it.

Hakafah: literally “procession;” the ritual procession with the *Torah* around the sanctuary.

Heksher: the mark delineating something as kosher.

Kiddush: literally “sanctification;” the blessing over wine that marks the Sabbath day separate from other days.

Kippah: *yarmulke* or head covering.

Kitah: literally “a class.”

Minhag: literally “a custom.”

Minyan: literally “a counting;” the quorum of ten adult Jews required to say certain prayers at services.

Mi Shebeirach: literally “May the One who blesses;” a whole category of prayers for people who either merit or need special blessings.

Mishna: literally “teaching;” the title of a Jewish legal work. It was compiled by Rabbi Judah the Prince around the year 200CE.

Mitzvah: literally “commandment.”

Motzi: literally “the one who brings forth;” the blessing thanking God for bringing forth bread from the earth.

Oleh/Olah: literally “one who goes up (male/female);” a person who has an *aliyah* to the *Torah*.

Oneg: literally “enjoyment;” the celebration with food and drinks following services.

Parashah: the *Torah* portion of the week.

Rosh Chodesh: literally “the head of the month;” the first day of the new month on the Jewish calendar. The new month begins when there is a new moon.

Seder K'riat ha'Torah: the portion of the service when the *Torah* and *haftarah* are read.

Shivah: literally “seven;” the week long period of mourning after the funeral. Typically a service needing a *minyan* is conducted at the home of the mourners.

Shul: a synagogue.

Sukkah: the booth that Jews are commanded to build during the festival of Sukkot (booths) so that we remember the transient lifestyle of our ancestors.

Tallit: a Jewish prayer shawl once only worn by men and boys from the age of *Bar Mitzvah*. Today, girls and women wear them also. A *tallit* must have *tzitzit* on the corners. *Talitot* is the plural of *tallit*.

Talmud: Jewish legal work consisting of two parts (the Mishnah and the Gemara). It was compiled and edited between the 5th-7th centuries CE.

Torah: also known as the Five Books of Moses. The *Torah* is the first section of the Hebrew Bible.

Tzedakah: literally “justice;” the term has come to represent charity – a form of meting out economic justice.

Tzitzit: specially tied fringes on the corners of the *tallit* that are meant to symbolize the *Mitzvot*.

Tzniut: literally “modesty;” the rules governing proper attire.

Hebrew name: a Hebrew name is used for ritual purposes. It is composed of your Hebrew name and the Hebrew name of both your parents. The word “*ben*” or “*bat*” is inserted to mean “son of” or “daughter of,” and the letter *vav* is used to mean “and,” e.g. Yoseif Tzvi ben Mordechai v’Esther; Sara Rivka bat Hannah v’Shalom. If someone with an honor does not have a Hebrew name, they may be called up by their English name.

CONTACT SHEET

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BARUCH SHEPTARANI

For a boy:

Baruch she-p'tarani mei'ansho she-lazeh.
Blessed be the One who has made our son
responsible for himself.

For a girl:

Baruch she-p'tarani mei'anshah she-lazot.
Blessed be the One who has made our
daughter responsible for herself.

For boys and girls:

May you live to see your world fulfilled, may you be our link to future worlds, and your hope encompass all the generations yet to be. May your heart conceive with understanding, may your mouth speak wisdom, and your tongue be stirred with sounds of joy. May your gaze be straight and sure, your eyes be lit with *Torah's* lamp, your face aglow with heavens radiance, your lips expressing words of knowledge, and may your inner-self be alive with righteousness. And may you always rush in eagerness to hear the words of One more ancient than all time. Amen. – Talmud: Berachot 17a

For a boy:

Baruch she-p'tarani mei'ansho she-lazeh.
Blessed be the One who has made our son
responsible for himself.

For a girl:

Baruch she-p'tarani mei'anshah she-lazot.
Blessed be the One who has made our
daughter responsible for herself.

For boys and girls:

Into our hands, O God, You have placed your *Torah*, to be held high by parents and children, and taught by one generation to the next. Whatever has befallen us, our people have remained steadfast in loyalty to the *Torah*. It was carried into exile in the arms of parents that their children might not be deprived of their birthright. And now, we pray that you _____, may always be worthy of this inheritance. Take its teaching into your heart, and in turn pass it on to your children and those who come after you. May you be a faithful Jew, searching for wisdom and truth, working for justice and peace. May the one who has always been our guide inspire you to bring honor to our family and to the house of Israel. Amen. – Gates of Prayer, The Union Prayerbook

For a boy:

Baruch she-p'tarani mei'ansho she-lazeh.
Blessed be the One who has made our son
responsible for himself.

For a girl:

Baruch she-p'tarani mei'anshah she-lazot.
Blessed be the One who has made our
daughter responsible for herself.

For boys and girls:

_____, our special prayer is for all people, but on this most important day, it is especially for you. Though our particular paths may be different, our hearts are one in search for what is right. We are all committed to the promise of what is good. You have chosen a path of wisdom, on a journey that leads to justice and peace. We pray that you will grow each day, filling your time with what truly matters: compassion for the needy, the embrace of the stranger and the love of all people. May the One who blessed our shared ancestors, Abraham and Sarah, Isaac and Rebecca, Jacob and Rachel and Leah, bless you on becoming *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. May you grow with strength and courage, and with vision and sensitivity. May you always have good health. And may you always be certain of our love. Amen. – Rabbi Elyse Frishman

SHUL-HOP FORM

*This form should be filled out after you visit each *shul*. You may bring this with you to the *shul*, but please remember that writing is not permitted in every *shul* on Shabbat.

Date you attended *shul*: _____

Name of *shul* attended: _____

Address of *shul* attended: _____

Name of Rabbi and/or Cantor that led the service: _____

What type of *shul* was it (Reform, Conservative, Orthodox, Askenazi, Sephardic, Spanish, Polish, etc...)?: _____

How long were services?: _____

Were there instruments used? Which ones?: _____

What was the prayerbook like? And what was it called?: _____

Describe the inside of the sanctuary: _____

What was the service like?: _____

Did you enjoy it? If so, why? If not, why?: _____

Were there things at this service that you wish we would do at the Hebrew Tabernacle? If so, what? Why?: _____

Were there things that you witnessed that you are happy we do not do at the Hebrew Tabernacle? If so, what? Why?: _____

Other thoughts: _____

MITZVAH/COMMUNITY SERVICE PROJECT

There are many ways in which you can fulfill the 15-hour requirement for a community service project. You may not select a project without the approval of the Rabbi or your mentor. You may choose a Jewish activity or a non-Jewish activity. The general requirement is that your time is spent making the world a better place. If you are working independently, you will need a way to prove to the Rabbi that you have fulfilled your commitment. If you are working with an organization, they will have to write a letter saying that you spent 15 hours with their organization.

Below, you will find some ideas for community service projects that you may want to consider. These are just suggestions, you may find your own.

IN WASHINGTON HEIGHTS:

The Hebrew Tabernacle
The Isabella Home for the Aged
Self-Help
FYI
Fort Tryon Park
New York Presbyterian Hospital
YM & YWHA of Washington Heights and Inwood

ELSEWHERE:

HUC-JIR Soup Kitchen
UJA-Federation
The Jewish Museum
The Jewish Heritage Museum

BNEI MITZVAH REGISTRATION FORM

Today's date: _____

Name of student: _____

Name of parent(s): _____

Are you currently members of the Hebrew Tabernacle?: _____

Is the student currently enrolled in the Hebrew School? _____

What Hebrew School Class are they in?: _____

What grade are they in at "regular" school?: _____

What is the student's birth date?: _____

What date would you like to request (please see the *Bnei Mitzvah* Handbook for guidelines on choosing a date)?: _____

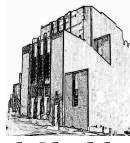
Is there special significance to this date?: _____

By requesting a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* date from the Hebrew Tabernacle, we hereby agree to all the terms and conditions laid out in the *Bnei Mitzvah* Handbook. These conditions include, but are not limited to: the student fulfilling all Hebrew School requirements, the student fulfilling all of the *Bnei Mitzvah* requirements and the family fulfilling their requirements. By requesting a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* date, we hereby acknowledge that we must be members of the Hebrew Tabernacle in good standing and that all fees* owed to the Hebrew Tabernacle and its Hebrew School will be paid no less than 30 days before the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.

Student Parent Parent

* The *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* fee may change between when you register and the year of the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. The fee will not change once you have been given the fee at the *Bnei Mitzvah* meeting in the year preceding the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*.

SAMPLE SHABBAT MORNING ATTENDANCE CARD



**I attended Shabbat Morning
services at the Hebrew
Tabernacle.**

Name: _____ Sample _____

Date: _____

BNEI MITZVAH HONORS

Tallit Presentation by Parent: Yes ____ No ____

Opening the ark for *Torah* service (English names):

1. _____ 2. _____

Aliyah 1: English: _____

Hebrew: _____ ben/bat _____ ve _____

Aliyah 2: English: _____

Hebrew: _____ ben/bat _____ ve _____

Aliyah 3: English: _____

Hebrew: _____ ben/bat _____ ve _____

Aliyah 4: English: _____

Hebrew: _____ ben/bat _____ ve _____

Aliyah 5: English: _____

Hebrew: _____ ben/bat _____ ve _____

Aliyah 6: English: _____

Hebrew: _____ ben/bat _____ ve _____

Aliyah 7: English: _____

Hebrew: _____ ben/bat _____ ve _____

Hagbah: English: _____

Hebrew: _____ ben/bat _____ ve _____

G'lilah: English: _____

Hebrew: _____ ben/bat _____ ve _____

Opening the ark for putting *Torah* away (English names):

1. _____ 2. _____

BNEI MITZVAH CHECKLIST

Administrative:

- Filled out *Bnei Mitzvah* Registration Form and submitted it to the office
- Membership is in good standing
- All fees have been paid to the Hebrew Tabernacle
- Gave a photograph and biography to the bulletin editor
- Gave a list of the honors with their Hebrew and English names to the Cantor
- Put the next *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* date in your calendar
- Had all of the meetings with the clergy that were required
- Had two rehearsals with the Cantor in the sanctuary
- Completed all Hebrew School requirements

Assign honors:

Shabbat Evening

- Candle lighting

Shabbat Morning

- Aliyot*
- Additional *Baal Koreh*
- One or two people to open the ark
- Hagbah*
- Glilah*
- Motzi*

Student's Shabbat Morning service requirements:

- Blessing for the *tallit*
- Torah blessings
- Haftarah* blessings
- 12 or more verses of Torah
- Hebrew and English of the *haftarah*
- D'var torah*

Optional prayers for the student:

- Shabbat evening *kiddush*
- Motzi* on Shabbat evening
- Torah* service
- Kiddush* and *motzi* Saturday Morning (these may be given to family or friends)

Other requirements:

- Attended 20 Shabbat morning services
- Shul*-hopped 10 times
- Mitzvah*/Community service project completed
 - Completed the typewritten summary of the *Mitzvah*/Community service project

BNEI MITZVAH PREPARATION CALENDAR

Date	When	What	Completed (✓)
	2-3 yrs. prior	Fill out Bnei Mitzvah Registration Form	
	2 years prior	Begin going to 20 Shabbat morning services, 10 Shul-hops, and Mitzvah/community service project	
2/06/06		Bnei Mitzvah Meeting	
	7 mos. prior	Family meeting with Rabbi and Cantor	
	6 mos. prior	Student meets with cantor	
	6 mos. prior	Student begins weekly meetings with tutor	
	4-4½ mos. prior	Student has check-up meeting with Cantor	
	3 mos. prior	Student and Rabbi meet	
	2 mos. prior	Student has check-up meeting with Cantor	
	2 mos. prior	Family has meeting with Rabbi and Cantor	
	2 mos. prior	Student and Rabbi meet	
	2 mos.-6 wks prior	Parents and Rabbi meet	
	1 st of mo. prior	Photo and bio of student must be given to the bulletin editor	
	1 mo. prior	Complete honors list to be given to Cantor	
	1 mo. prior	Student and Rabbi meet	
	3 weeks prior	Student has check-up meeting with Cantor	
	2 weeks prior	Rehearsal A with Cantor in sanctuary	
	2 weeks prior	Student and Rabbi meet	
	2 weeks prior	All requirements are due	
	1 week prior	Rehearsal B with Cantor in sanctuary	
	☆	<i>Bar/Bat Mitzvah</i>	
	☆	The next <i>Bar/Bat Mitzvah</i>	

SHAMASHING - USHERING INSTRUCTIONS

Your family will be ushering at the Saturday morning service of the previous *Bar / Bat Mitzvah* candidate. Here is what you'll need to do.

Before Services

- Your whole family should arrive together at 10:00 am. You should be dressed as you would be at your child's *Bar / Bat Mitzvah*. Services begin at 10:15.
- We will be using the blue Gates of Prayer *siddur*.
- The *Bnei Mitzvah* family may have prepared programs for today's service. Please acquire an ample supply to give out to guests. Please have a look at the programs and see if it contains Hebrew text for the *Torah* and *Haftarah* readings. If not, you should also prepare to hand out copies of the red *Etz Hayyim* Chumash to those who might want to follow along during the *Torah* service. We do not have many copies of *Etz Hayyim*, so please use discretion.
- Ask the HT staff member by the main door for the stack of "weeklies."
- You are to be stationed at the top of the staircase where the book carts are located.
- Wish everyone who enters a "*Shabbat Shalom*", and welcome them to the Hebrew Tabernacle.
- Hand each worshipper a *siddur* (prayerbook), weekly, and a program if available. As mentioned above, hand out an *Etz Hayyim* to those who request it, if necessary.
- Inform all worshippers that if they choose, a *kippah* (yarmulke) and *tallit* (prayer shawl) are available to them. *Kippot* are in a basket near the prayer books or may be in the Gold wing if supplied by the *Bnei Mitzvah* family. *Tallitot* are along the façade of the pews near the prayer books.
- If at any point, a worshipper needs to use the chair-lift, please let one of the staff know. Additionally, listening-assistance devices are also available.
- If any children are not attending services with an adult, or is sitting apart from his/her family, they may only sit in the ground level seats. Please do not let the school friends of the *Bar / Bat Mitzvah* sit in the top rows of the balcony.

During Services

- Please remain standing at the top of the stairs until the congregation is invited to be seated during the *Amidah*. At which point you may sit behind the book carts.
- While the congregation is standing, it is disrespectful to enter or leave the Sanctuary. Worshippers entering can wait with you at the entrance to the Sanctuary until the congregation is seated, at which point they may take their seats.
- Keep a few copies of the prayer book open to the current page. As worshippers walk in, hand them a prayerbook which has already been opened to the proper place in the service.
- Keep an eye on the school friends of the *Bar / Bat Mitzvah*. Prevent them from wandering about during the service, making noise, or doing inappropriate actions. One strong word is often enough.

- If you hear any noise emanating from the Gold Wing, please make an effort to quiet it down. You can close the curtain at the bottom of the stairs to prevent traffic while the congregation is standing, or to block out some noise.
- Unfortunately, some guests, whether Jewish or not, are unaware of proper behavior and decorum in a house of worship. If they or their children are disrupting the service, please take action.

After Services

- Please stand by the book carts and be prepared to take the prayer books, *chumashim*, programs and weeklies.
- Wish everyone a “*Shabbat shalom*” on their way out of the Sanctuary as you take their materials.
- While the Rabbi will announce that the congregations should return the books to the rear of the Sanctuary at the end of services, there are always a few who leave their stuff behind. Please collect them after everyone has left. Also, take out any papers, programs or weeklies that may have been tucked inside.
- Take a walk through the pews, including the sides and the balcony, for any personal items left behind. Please bring these to the Kiddush / Luncheon and make an announcement so they can be returned.