



Bar/Bat Mitzvah Guide

Mazel Tov on your child becoming a *Bar/Bat Mitzvah*. It seems that in the blink of an eye your child has gone from being a little child to a young adult. And now, you and your family are approaching an important passage. We at Temple Adas Shalom are happy to help you create a celebration that is meaningful to you, your child, and all of your family and friends. We will help you guide your child along his/her first steps towards this new status on the path of becoming a Jewish adult.

This packet contains a great deal of information to help you sort through the details of this process. Please take the time to read it and note the dates by which various decisions must be made and various information shared. Please see Appendix A for a suggested timeline. If you need guidance in any of these areas or would just like to “talk things over,” we will be very happy to help in any way we can.

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MESSAGE FROM RELIGIOUS PRACTICES COMMITTEE

Bar and Bat Mitzvah is a major milestone for a Jewish boy or girl. It is also an important emotional and religious passage for parents and the entire family. For parents, we celebrate our child’s coming of age. Our child’s becoming a Bat or Bar Mitzvah gives us a chance to affirm the values and relationships we hold most dear. Following time-honored Jewish tradition we make these affirmations in the presence of family, friends and community. We incorporate prayer, study of Torah, *tzedakah*, hospitality, and celebration.

To accomplish all of this takes collaboration between parents, the student, clergy, educators, synagogue staff as well as relatives, friends, and a host of others. At Temple Adas Shalom, we approach this process with a true sense of teamwork, *derekh erez* (respect for each other) and *yirat Shamayim* (respect for our Creator). It is an honor to join you on this sacred journey.

An Important Note

Our congregation takes great pride in making every Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration special, even though the participation of each student is basically the same. There are occasions; however, when special circumstances necessitate an adjustment in the student’s participation. We will do everything possible to work with each student as an individual, with the ultimate goal of maximizing his or her self-esteem and sense of accomplishment. Please feel free to discuss any concerns you might have with either the Rabbi or RPC Chair.

A HISTORY OF THE B’NAI MITZVAH CEREMONIES

In modern Jewish practice, Jewish children come of age at 13. When a male child comes of age, he is officially a Bar Mitzvah (“son of the commandments”); a female child a Bat Mitzvah (“daughter of the commandments”). The terms are commonly used as a short-hand for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah’s coming-of-age ceremony and/or celebration.

In its earliest form, the only ceremony associated with a child becoming a Bar Mitzvah was a blessing by the child’s father thanking God for freeing him from responsibility for the deeds of his child, who is now accountable for his own actions. By the 17th century, boys celebrating their coming of age were also reading from the five books of Moses (the Torah), chanting the weekly Haftarah portion from The Prophets, leading services, and delivering learned talks.

In 1922, the founder of the Reconstructionist Jewish movement, Mordecai Kaplan, held the first Bat Mitzvah ceremony, for his daughter Judith.

A typical Bar/Bat Mitzvah involves the child taking an active part in Friday night and Saturday morning or afternoon (Mincha/Havdalah) services on a Shabbat close to his or her 13th birthday. Training for participating in the service typically begins at least a year before the ceremony. Reserving a date for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony at Temple Adas Shalom takes place when the student is in sixth grade.

Historically, Bar/Bat Mitzvah has been viewed as a first step in a young person's acceptance of the obligations to family and community as a responsible Jew. It was and should continue to be the beginning of a lifetime of the performance of *mitzvot*, study, prayer, and a commitment to share the destiny of the Jewish people.

Becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah means that the young man or woman now has a new status in the community with privileges and responsibilities.

WHAT DOES A BAR/BAT MITZVAH DO?

There are basically four areas of participation for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at a Shabbat morning service: to be a *sh'liach tzibur*, "leader of worship;" to chant from the Torah and the Haftarah; and to offer a d'var Torah or teaching on the week's Torah portion.

Sh'liach Tzibur

One of the oldest and most prestigious roles in the synagogue is to be the *sh'liach tzibur*. Literally, the "representative of the community," the *sh'liach tzibur* leads the congregation in prayer. Each Bar/Bat Mitzvah student has the opportunity to be the service leader in this sacred role for part of our worship service on the day of his/her Bar/Bat Mitzvah and is privileged to be *sh'liach tzibur* in the future in our congregation and whenever Jews gather for worship. Certain of the prayers may only be led by one who has reached the age of Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Most of the Hebrew prayers for the service have been learned in religious school. The tutor or rabbi meets with each Bar/Bat Mitzvah student about one year prior to his or her date to assess his/her proficiency. The student must know the Torah and Haftarah blessings. In the instance of a B'nai Mitzvah ceremony with more than one child, the liturgy will be shared, and prayers will be added to accommodate students. The specific Hebrew prayers that have to be additionally learned will be determined in consultation with the Rabbi and/or Religious Practices Committee Chair.

K'riat HaTorah

Each Bar/Bat Mitzvah assumes the role of the *Baal (at) k'riah*, "Torah reader," for the day. This entails the learning of selection(s) from the week's Torah portion. The weekly portion, chanted directly from the Torah, contain neither vowels nor trope (markings that designate the melody). Our students are well prepared by being taught the Torah trope in Religious School during 5th and 6th grades, and this is reinforced by the tutor in private tutoring sessions. Although the minimum requirement is chanting blessings before and after the Torah reading, our students generally read from the Torah scroll.

The Haftarah

Following the reading of Torah, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student will chant the Haftarah or reading from the books of the Prophets. Like the Torah reading, the Haftarah is chanted according to

a specific melody (trope) that is delivered in Religious school and from the tutor. The number of verses to be read will be determined by the tutor.

The D'var Torah

One of the privileges of becoming B'nai Mitzvah is to have the opportunity to teach the congregation. A *d'var Torah* (literally, a "word of Torah") identifies concepts from the Torah portion of the week that provide meaning and guidance to us. It is not a sermon or a term paper. It is typically a single idea based on the text of the Torah. B'nai Mitzvah and parents read the entire Torah portion in English to prepare for composing the *d'var Torah*. We also provide additional resources to make the meaning of the text more accessible to the students. The Rabbi meets with the student individually and is in contact by email throughout this process.

Part 1 An explanation of what becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah means to the student:

This section should include what a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is, and what it means personally.

Part 2 Once you have done that, you need to apply the lesson of your portion to your daily life.

What are your thoughts about it? What do you think is the way to read the Torah? The wonderful thing about Torah study is that there are no wrong answers. The process of Midrash is the combination of the text and the reader. Torah is only complete when we put ourselves, through our ideas and questions, into the text. This makes the Torah not just an ancient document but a living and never-ending source of Truth. What we want to hear are the ideas you have to offer about the Torah. This part is especially powerful when you apply it to your life, particularly as a Bat or Bar Mitzvah.

Part 3 Embarking on a Life of Mitzvah

B'nai Mitzvah are now responsible for fulfilling *mitzvot* of service to community. See section below on Tri-Mitzvah-Lon. This portion of your speech explains why you chose the three projects and relates this to the Torah.

Part 4 Thanks.

This is the part of your speech where you will thank all the people who have helped you arrive at this day. It is appropriate to thank your parents, siblings, tutor, teen mentor, Rabbi, teachers, and anyone else who has been a strong influence in your Jewish life.

KEEPING BAR AND BAT MITZVAH IN PERSPECTIVE

Bar/Bat Mitzvah is about the acceptance of responsibility.

In the final analysis, this is the bottom line of becoming a Bar and Bat Mitzvah. Learning the skill of *k'riah*,—"the reading of the Torah" and being the *sh'liach tzibur* are part of that responsibility. The greatest skill is to respond to the challenge of living a life of mitzvah. This is how Judaism defines maturity.

The Torah is the center of Judaism.

Everything we do as Jews, everything we believe, everything we value revolves around the Torah. The Torah is the testimony of our people's encounter with God. However you interpret those

events in the wilderness of Sinai some three millennia ago, what cannot be dismissed is the sacredness with which our ancestors have embraced this legacy. This is why the first mitzvah we expect our children to fulfill is to stand at the Torah.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a community observance.

It is not by coincidence that we choose to hold this initiation ceremony in public. To be a Jew means to live within a covenantal relationship—not only with God but with other Jews as well. Bar/Bat Mitzvah marks the entry of the child as a full-fledged member of the community. The awarding of an *Aliyah*, (“being called to the Torah”), is a gift of the Jewish people. For this reason, the marking of the child’s coming of age takes place in the synagogue—the communal home.

Fortunately, you have a built-in community to help you along the way during your B’nai Mitzvah journey – the other parents in your child’s class. We encourage all of the parents in each grade year to become a cohort class of their own – a “mini-community”. We do this by conducting a series of workshops with the parents as their children enter the 6th grade. As a result, many classes have gone in together on a class gift to the Temple instead of “trading checks” to one another for B’nai Mitzvah gifts. Families assist one another in setting up the Social Hall during the week of the event. And each family selects a “buddy family” to be there for whatever comes up when assistance is needed – running errands; cleaning up after the Friday Night Oneg; etc.

So who to invite???

Below are suggestions/reminders to help you make the invitation list. Following the guidelines of a Jewish community event, it is expected that all Religious School classmates, as well as the tutor, teen mentor, and Rabbi, be invited to the service and reception. If a member of the congregation is invited to have an honor during the B’nai Mitzvah service, typically, that person would be invited to the reception as well.

Please also extend an offer to attend the service to the Temple Adas Shalom community. This invitation can be issued through an email and the weekly bulletin. We encourage you to send personal invitations to Religious School classmate parents, all religious school teachers and madrichim who instructed your child, staff members who have assisted you, the class grandparents in the Saba/Savta program, and the Temple Adas Shalom Congregational President and Principal - even if it is for the service only. The Temple President and Religious School Principal are often invited to the reception out of respect for the office that they hold.

Please strive to make it clear to everyone whether they are invited to the service only or both the service and reception. Everyone understands that there is a cost associated with the reception, and not everyone who you want to be there can be invited. Because it is a mitzvah to celebrate with the B’nai Mitzvah, we will recite *Kiddush* and Motzi in the Social Hall. Grape juice, challah and minimal snacks should be provided for the congregation following the Saturday service.

A sample “Service Only” invitation may be found in Appendix B.

Some people have chosen to invite the entire congregation and have a *Kiddush* reception in the social hall. If the numbers are too large for the social hall, some have rented tents for the parking lot. If you have a large family and expect a large number to attend from the congregation, holding a reception at the Temple might be difficult. The Social Hall capacity is 320 chairs or 160 tables and chairs. A rental fee is incurred-Appendix C

Invitation Tip

Before mailing invitations, write a sequential number on the back of each return card, and create a master list for yourself. That way, if a guest forgets to write his/her name on the return, you will be able to determine who it is. Do not expect everyone to return their cards – even close family! You may have to call up to a quarter of your list to determine who will be attending.

Yarmulka Tip

We have many, many yarmulkas at the Temple, so it is not necessary to order any. If the family decides to order yarmulkas for the occasion, the number required can be estimated by counting how many males will be attending (typically from about age 10 and older). For example, if 150 people RSVP that they will be attending and 70 are males older than 10, the amount of yarmulkas to order is 6 dozen. Many companies have a 5 dozen minimum order.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony is not a performance: it is a celebration.

The synagogue is not a theater, and the Bimah is not a stage, and the congregation is not an audience. More to the point, the only mistake one can make at a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is to lose sight of this truth.

Judaism has a formal name for the meal after a Bar/Bat Mitzvah: *s'udat mitzvah*. This meal is in honor of the performance of a mitzvah. It, too, is a sacred gathering. This is not to say that it must be solemn; it is to say, however, that the spirit of the morning's celebration should be perpetuated through the performance of *mitzvot*. The recitation of the blessings and the setting aside of a portion of one's bounty for the poor demonstrate that the morning's celebration was not an isolated event but a standard from which to follow.

The meaning of becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is enduring only if it takes place within a context of continued Jewish growth.

Being a Bat or Bar Mitzvah is not the experience of a lifetime. It is a lifetime experience—a state of being that remains with us throughout our lives. Indeed, the true measure of performance comes not on the day one becomes a Bat or Bar Mitzvah but in the days that follow. In other words, becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah should be thought of as a Jewish “commencement,” marking not an end point but a beginning—a beginning of a lifetime of *mitzvot*, a beginning of a lifetime of learning.

We expect that our B'nai Mitzvah will observe this new status by continuing in their religious education to confirmation, participate in ASTY, our Temple Youth Group, become *madrachim* in our Religious School, serve as teen mentors of future B'nai Mitzvah, serve as *shlichai tzibur* and Torah readers, be greeters for Shabbat services, be involved in other community service and in the life of our congregation and community. We have great confidence in them!!

REQUIREMENTS AND EXPECTATIONS FOR BAR/BAT MITZVAH

Religious School

Attend religious school for minimum of four consecutive years leading up to and through Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The term “Religious School” consists of both Midweek Religious School and Sunday Religious School. Both aspects of the program are necessary to prepare the students how to read and speak Hebrew as well as impart an understanding of the background and basis of the liturgy.

Service Attendance

Attend services three out of four Sabbaths or holidays per month in the six months prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This may also include attending funeral or *shiva* services.

Tri-Mitzvah-Lon

Complete or be in progress a project pre-approved by the Rabbi. See description of Tri-Mitzvah-Lon below and Appendix D for Meeting the Rabbi.

The Tri-Mitzvah-Lon was developed to enhance the “mitzvah” aspect of the Bar or Bat Mitzvah. The Tri-Mitzvah-Lon allows our students to experience the fulfillment of serving their temple, their community, and the Jewish people. Instead of the Triathlon of swimming, cycling, and running, our children will be doing the Tri-Mitzvah-Lon of:

Service to the Congregation

During the six month period prior to the B’nai Mitzvah, the candidate (and his/her family) will participate in service to the congregation. (e.g. one student worked with Dr. David Rosenblatt on a mosaic project, another student helped in the office on Wednesday afternoons, a third student and her family organized Jewish genetic testing. Other examples are ushering at services, helping to change Torah covers for holidays, and helping with recycling)

Service to the Community

During the six month period prior to the B’nai Mitzvah ceremony, the candidate will choose a project within the global community which appeals to his/her interest. The candidate will learn the name and description of this mitzvah. The B’nai Mitzvah will communicate to the congregation about this project, either through the congregational newsletter or the weekly bulletin. Some examples might be:

- Visit the elderly—family members, a neighbor, or a nursing home
- Work on an ecology project
- Work in a soup kitchen
- Collect old but usable clothes, toys, tapes, videos, etc., and give them to the needy and the homeless
- Participate in a walk-a-thon for some cause
- Give to a local organization helping the homeless and the poor (e.g. Anna’s House)
- Give to support local education (e.g. www.geefinc.com)

Service to Clal Yisrael

The candidate will choose one from among twinning programs so that he/she becomes aware of the Jewish community around the world and in our history. Rabbi is able to assist with deciding on a twinning project. For example:

- a child who did not have an opportunity to have a Bar or Bat Mitzvah during the Shoah (<http://www.wfjcs.org/twinningpack33104.pdf>), a Project of the World Federation of Jewish Child Survivors of the Holocaust
- a child with disability in Israel who is having a specially tailored ceremony (www.masorti.org/about/special.php)
- a child from the Abuyadaya Jewish community in Uganda or the Kaifeng China Jewish community who is Bar/Bat Mitzvah age (www.kulanu.org)

- a parent/grandparent who never had a Bar/Bat Mitzvah

These activities enrich the B'nai Mitzvah experience for the kids, for the families, and for all of us. We look forward to hearing the accounts of the projects in the B'nai Mitzvah speech and to read about them in the newsletter.

Family members, both Jewish and not Jewish, are encouraged to participate in the Tri-Mitzvah-Lon projects.

Financial Obligations

Our community depends upon the financial support given by our members. Tutoring will only begin once the temple Treasurer has informed the Youth V-P that financial obligations are on track to be met (i.e., good standing). Your financial obligations must be up-to-date by the time of your *simcha*. Please make arrangements with the Temple Treasurer if you have any questions or concerns. Additionally, a B'nai Mitzvah Contract must be signed 6 months in advance to guarantee the B'nai Mitzvah date. See Appendix C.

SERVICE INFORMATION

In addition to deciding when to celebrate the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, you and your family will have choices as to the order of the service and special prayers to accommodate various family needs. The basic contents of the service conform to the Religious Practices Committee standards, but the English prayers and melodies can vary. The Rabbi/RPC Chair/tutor will guide you in these choices. Temple Adas Shalom will work with you to produce a small bi-fold (2-4 pages/5 ½-8 ½) that includes honors and specifics regarding your event. Office staff will typeset and reproduce the bi-fold at no additional cost. All information must be provided to the secretary no later than 2 weeks prior to the event (see Appendix E).

There are several options for musical accompaniment during your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah services. Rabbi Gila can accompany on guitar; Mike Mullis can accompany on keyboard; the Temple Choir can accompany; and there are several individuals who can play instruments or can accompany *a capella*. It is suggested that you investigate musical options early on, as different people have different criteria regarding their availability.

Selecting a Service

Traditionally a Bar/Bat Mitzvah has been associated with a child being called up to the Torah (*Aliyah*). In the Jewish tradition, the Torah is read on Shabbat and holidays such as Sukkot, Chanukah and Passover, and also at the new moon (Rosh Chodesh) observances when that occurs on a Sunday. Our congregation holds weekly Shabbat services on Friday nights and on some Saturday mornings. Afternoon, evening, and Havdalah services can also be selected for Bar/Bat Mitzvah. This decision needs to be made early in the planning process because it may change the Torah portion your child learns. All of our services use Mishkan T'filah as the prayer book. Optionally, families may choose to use Visual T'Filah, a powerpoint presentation that is projected on a screen on the Bimah.

Friday night

The service starts promptly at 7:30P.M. This is the service frequently attended by the congregation. Most of our B'nai Mitzvah lead the Friday night on their own and Saturday morning service with the Rabbi/Service Leader. The Torah and Haftarah are read and the Bar/Bat Mitzvah delivers the d'var torah on Saturday morning in this case. Other students may prefer, in addition to leading the service, to be called to the Torah, chant Haftarah, and deliver the d'var torah on Friday night. This would extend the time of the service to at least two hours (the Friday night service generally lasts about 1 hour 20 minutes. After the service, *Kiddush* with wine, grape juice, and an "Oneg" (sweets or light hors d'oeuvres) are served. The B'nai Mitzvah family sponsors the Oneg, assisted by the Oneg Buddy Family (see Appendix F).

Saturday morning

The Shabbat morning service is traditionally when the Torah is read and thus has generally been the service at which the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ritual takes place. This service is be tailored for your family. The service usually starts at 10:00 A.M. and lasts about two hours. Consult with the Rabbi/RPC Chair if it appears that this schedule does not meet your needs.

Everyone in the synagogue community is welcome and should attend to welcome the Bar/Bat Mitzvah into the community. Challah and grape juice/wine is provided by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family for those who attend the service but will not attend the party. Please see above for how to invite the congregation.

Afternoon/evening/Havdalah

These services generally last two hours and fifteen minutes and are timed to conclude just after sundown. There is some flexibility in the timing, especially during seasons when sundown occurs later in the evening. The decision to celebrate at the conclusion of Shabbat advances the Torah and Haftarah readings to those designated for the following Shabbat. The preparation for your child will differ little from that for a Saturday morning service. The Havdalah ceremony is included at the temple or off-site at the celebration.

Materials

Each student is provided with a copy of his or her Torah and Haftarah portions (one year before), which contains the Hebrew texts. In addition, families are provided a copy of Trope Trainer software in grade 5 to assist with Torah and Haftarah readings. Maftir readings for all portions can also be found on the synagogue website. Finally, the tutor and/or teen mentor works with each student to develop a script (inserted into his/her *Mishkan T'filah* prayer book) used on the day of the ceremony.

Dress Code

B'nai Mitzvah students, family members and guests wear dressy clothes - for men, either a suit or slacks, tie and jacket and for women, a dress, suit, or formal pantsuit. Out of respect for the sanctity of the sanctuary and the Torah, the Bat Mitzvah girl and women who ascend the Bimah must have their shoulders, back and upper arms covered. A sweater or jacket can be worn for this purpose. Skirt length should be appropriate for bowing.

Parent involvement

Besides *kvelling* (untranslatable), the parents' involvement in a Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration includes:

Reciting the blessing over the Shabbat candles on Friday Night (Jewish parent only).

Presenting the *Tallit* to their child and offering a prayer for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah (both parents).

Participating in the ceremony of the handing down of the Torah from Generation to Generation (both parents present; Jewish parents physically involved in ceremony).

Having the *Aliyah* preceding the B'nai Mitzvah; this involves reciting the Torah blessing (both parents present; Jewish parents chants blessings).

The wonderful option and honor of reading from the Torah. Your child's tutor will help you prepare (Jewish parent only).

The Non-Jewish parent can also be involved in the service in many ways other than those noted above. See section below for additional options.

Of course, all parents can participate by assisting the child in fulfilling the Tri-Mitzvah-Lon.

Guidelines for the Parental Prayer

Rabbi Eliezer ben Rabbi Shimon said: A man is responsible for his son until the age of thirteen; thereafter he must say: Blessed are You who has now freed me from the responsibility of the boy.

-Midrash Genesis Rabbah 63:10

The tradition of the parent reciting a blessing upon a child's coming of age is very old. The above text indicates that it was ritualized and probably performed on the occasion of the child's first *Aliyah*. And although it might seem a bit inappropriate to recite a prayer freeing yourself from responsibility for your child, its underlying principle should be most instructive in preparing your remarks to your son or daughter. Indeed, in many ways the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony marks the individualization of the child: It is the commencement of a young person's acceptance of adult responsibility and the freeing of the parent from that task.

The intent of the parental prayer in our service is to afford the mother and/or father the opportunity to publicly acknowledge—in a sacred setting—the joy and pride they feel at that moment; to ask for God's blessings for your daughter or son. More importantly, they can also use that time to share their hopes and dreams for their child, particularly in relation to his or her being called to the Torah. In other words, it's an opportunity to articulate the meaning of the moment.

You may wish to use some of the examples provided below, or from *Mishkan T'filah*, or write something entirely unique. In any event, we encourage you to prepare your remarks in advance. We also respectfully request that each parent's remarks not exceed two minutes. When you are done, please feel free to hug your child. Crying is permitted.

Sample prayers for passing on of Torah

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 children might not be deprived of their birthright.

And now I pray that you, my child, will 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. Thus will you be among those who labor to bring nearer the day when God will be One and God's name will be One.

May your eyes sparkle with the light of Torah,
and your ears hear the music of its words.
May the space between each letter of the scrolls
bring warmth and comfort to your soul.
May the syllables draw holiness from your heart,
and may this holiness be gentle and soothing
to you and all God's creatures.
May your study be passionate,
and meanings bear more meanings
until life arrays itself to you
as a dazzling wedding feast.
And may your conversation,
even of the commonplace,
be a blessing to all who listen to your words
and see the Torah glowing on your face.

Danny Siegel

Praised is God who has granted new responsibility to _____ and to us. As _____ begins to enjoy his/her new status among the Jewish people, a status that redefines our own role in his/her life, may God grant us the wisdom to continue as guides and counselors, allowing _____ to live in accordance with the teachings of our Torah as a responsible Jewish adult.

Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheynu Melech ha-olam

(For a male) shep'tarani mei-ancho shelazeh.

(For a female) shep'tarani mei-anshah shelazoh.

Praised are You, Adonai our God, who rules the universe, who has freed us of some responsibilities and conferred new ones upon _____. *The Rabbinical Assembly*

Other participants in the service

Honors are an important part of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. Family and friends who are given honors cease to be observers and become active participants. A variety of opportunities for family and friends exist within the Shabbat morning worship service. Included in this B'nai Mitzvah handbook is an Honors worksheet (see Appendix E).

The Involvement of Younger Siblings and Children

Siblings or other young children should be given age-appropriate honors, such as opening the ark. Siblings may also help in leading other prayers that they know, and classmates are usually involved in certain prayers/songs during both the Friday and Saturday services. Older siblings/friends may read from the Torah or can be given an *Aliyah*.

Participation of Non-Jews

We welcome the participation of non-Jewish family and friends. While there are some limitations, we very much want all family members and guests to be involved. Non-Jews may participate in any honors except those that involve physical contact with the Torah or the active recitation of the Torah blessings, candlelighting blessings, *Shema h*, *Kaddish*, *Kiddush*, or *Amidah*. English speaking roles, Ark openings, and other honors or roles are available to non-Jews. In the instance of an Interfaith marriage, both parents are called to the Torah for the *Aliyah*, but only the Jewish spouse recites the blessings.

Throwing Candy at B'nai Mitzvah Services

Some families choose to throw candy to indicate our joy at happy occasions, and to express our wish that life will be sweet for the family observing this *simcha*. Distribution of candy during services is distracting to the child reading the Haftarah, and sometimes, the youthful exuberance of teenage guests gets out of hand, and spoils the joyous mood. Therefore, candy is to be distributed during the closing song, and may be tossed (underhanded) as the participants leave the Bimah while everyone sings SIMAN TOV. Only soft candy is permitted, such as Sunkist Gems.

Videotaping during B'nai Mitzvah Services

The Religious Practices Committee has developed specific guidelines for families wishing to video the religious service when their child becomes Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The video camera must be set up in advance, be in an unobtrusive area of the sanctuary, and need little if any attention during the service. The placement of the video camera should be preapproved by the Rabbi/RPC chair.

Babysitting

Babysitting is provided free of charge during Friday night services. If babysitting services are needed during Saturday morning services, the B'nai Mitzvah family is responsible for finding care. Please contact the Youth VP for a list of potential babysitters.

Etiquette Guide for Guests – See Sanctuary Brochure [\(link\)](#)

TORAH SERVICE HONORS

Ambassador/greeter

The ambassador/greeter ideally is one of the other parents in your B'nai Mitzvah cohort or another member of the Temple Adas Shalom family, familiar with our service customs. The greeter stands at the door of the sanctuary and hands out *tallit* for Jewish attendees, the weekly bulletin, *kippot*, and Sanctuary Etiquette pamphlets. He/she can also provide guidance to those who have honors during the service and to anyone who may need any special arrangements or

accommodations. If needed, a person familiar with the B'nai Mitzvah family could assist the Ambassador identifying those family members with honors.

Opening/Closing Ark

The recipient of this honor is responsible for opening and closing the ark. At the beginning and/or at the conclusion of the Torah service, the Rabbi/service leader calls for Ark openers and other honor recipients. This is the cue for the Ark opener to ascend the Bimah.

There are usually two Ark openers. Each takes a place on either side of the ark. When signaled, they each slide one of the Ark doors from the middle outward to open it. When the Torah procession moves through the sanctuary, each Ark opener follows one of the Torah scrolls around the sanctuary and back to the ark. Once the scrolls are returned to the ark, the Ark is closed and the Ark openers return to their seats.

For the return of the scroll(s) used during the service, the Rabbi/service leader will say: "We now rise to return the scrolls to the ark". The second set of Ark openers ascend the Bimah and open the Ark doors when signaled by the Rabbi/service leader. After the scroll (or scrolls) are returned, the Ark is closed (when signaled). At this time it is customary to shake hands with those on the Bimah then descend the Bimah back to their seats.

Anyone (Jewish or non-Jewish and of any age) can open and close the ark.

Torah Carrier

This honoree is responsible for holding and carrying one Torah scroll during the Torah procession. When the Torah service begins, the Rabbi/service leader calls for Ark openers and other honorees. This is the cue to ascend the Bimah.

The Gabbai will hand the Torah scroll to the Carrier. It is customary to hold the Torah on the right side, except if one is left-handed. The Torah is held as the *Shema* and *Echad Elohaynu* is recited. During "*Gadlu l'Adonai*", turn and face the Ark and bow slightly. Once complete, turn back around and descend the stairs. During the Torah procession, proceed down the center aisle, moving slowly enough so people can kiss the Torah. At the end of the center aisle, the Torah carriers split, one moving to the right and one to the left, making their way back up to the Bimah. When the carriers ascend the Bimah with the Torah it will be placed back in the Ark by the Gabbai. It is customary to shake hands and descend the Bimah to your seat when you are finished.

It is customary to wear head covering (optional for women) and *tallit* when performing this honor. This honor is reserved for Jewish adults.

Aliyot - Blessings Over The Torah

The honorees given *Aliyot* will be called to the Torah by the *Ba'al Korah*/cantor. There are typically three *Aliyot*, but there can be as many as seven during a Torah service. Each person (or group of persons) will be told which number *Aliyah* they are assigned (1-7). The Gabbai will announce the name (s) of those having the *Aliyah*. The first honor will be called up by "Ya'mod Cohen" (if you are a Cohen) or Ya'mod Rishon. The second honor will be "Ya'mod Levi (if you are a Levi) or "Ya'mod Shayni". The third will be "Ya'amod Shlishi". There is not a strict requirement for Cohen and Levi; however, this order is typically followed if Cohen and Levi are present and are offered *Aliyot*.

Aliyah Primer

Below are the basic fundamentals of being called to the Torah for an *Aliyah* at Temple Adas Shalom. Meaning to “go up” or “ascend,” *Aliyah* also implies a spiritual ascent. An *Aliyah* is considered to be one of the most sacred privileges in Judaism. Consequently, you must be Jewish and “of age” (i.e., B’nai Mitzvah) to qualify for an *Aliyah*. Indeed, the ceremony of Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a celebration of a child’s first *Aliyah*.

Ascending the Bimah for your *Aliyah*

When called for the *Aliyah*, ascend the Bimah (or pulpit) and stand to the right of the reader. He/She will point to the place in the sefer Torah, scroll, where he/she is reading. Touch that spot with the *tzitzit* (fringes) of the *tallit* (prayer shawl), and then kiss the *tzitzit*. At this point, recite the *b’rachah* (blessing). If desired, grasp one of the wooden posts of the scroll as the blessing is recited.

The First Blessing

Below is the blessing that is recited in Hebrew prior to the reading of the Torah. This blessing will be on the Bimah in both Hebrew and Transliteration. The first line is recited by the person doing the *Aliyah*, the congregation responds with the second line, the second line is repeated by the person doing the *Aliyah* who then continues with the rest of the first blessing.

Bar’chu et Adonai hame’vorach.

The congregation responds,
Baruch Adonai ham’vorach l’olam va-ed.

You then respond:
Baruch Adonai ham’vorach l’olam va-ed.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam
asher bachar banu mikol ha-amim
v’natan lanu et Torohto
Baruch Atah Adonai Notein ha Torah.

The congregation responds, “Amen.”

The translation of the blessing is: Praise Adonai, the One to be praised. Praise Adonai, the One to be praised, forever. Praised are You, Adonai, our God, Ruler of the universe, who has chosen us from among the peoples and given us the Torah. Praised are You, Adonai, the Giver of the Torah.

The Torah Reading

Following the conclusion of the first *b’rachah*, the reader will chant the selection from the Torah. When the reader is finished, the *b’rachah* after the Torah reading is recited.

The Concluding Blessing

Following the Torah reading, the concluding *b'rachah* is offered. Again, the person offering the blessing will touch the place in the *sefer Torah* (scroll) with the *tzitzit* (fringes) of his or her *tallit* (prayer shawl) and may choose to grasp the posts of the Torah scroll while reciting the blessing.

Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu melech ha-olam
Asher natan lanu Torat emet
V'chayei olam nata b'to cheinu.
Baruch Atah Adonai notein ha Torah.
The congregation responds, "Amen."

Translation: Praised are You, Adonai, our God, Ruler of the universe, who has given us the Torah of truth and implanted within us eternal life. Praised are You, Adonai, the Giver of Torah.

NOTE: There are many websites where these blessings are chanted. Torah and Haftarah portions and blessings may be found at stephanieshore.com or www.bible.ort.org as well as on Trope Trainer.

After the Concluding Blessing

Following the concluding *b'rachah*, the person(s) who was called to the Torah should move to the reader's left and remain there until the next *Aliyah* is concluded. They then return to his or her seat. It is customary to shake hands with those on the Bima

Torah Reader

When accepting the honor of a Torah Reader the person must be committed to learning and reading their Torah portion correctly with no errors. This honor is extremely important, as reciting the words of the Torah incorrectly can change the meaning of the word. The person reading the Torah portion points (with the *Yad*) to the first word they are reading so the person performing the *Aliyah* can kiss the Torah with his/her *tallit*. Once the blessing before the Torah is complete, the person reads the Torah portion. When the Torah reading is complete, the reader points to the last word he/she read so the person doing the *Aliyah* can once again kiss the Torah. When the blessing is complete it is customary to shake hands with those on the Bimah.

Hagbah - Lifting the Torah

The *Hagbah* is called to the Bimah by the B'aal Korah/Cantor. ("Ya'mod Hagbah, Ya'mod G'lilah"). The lifting of the Torah takes place after reciting the *MiShebeirach* prayer for healing, the prayer for the deployed, and the *Kaddish* over the Torah. The congregation stands for *Kaddish* and *Hagbah*.

Please ascend the Bimah and move toward the podium. The Rabbi or one of the *Gabba'im* (people standing on either side of the podium during the Torah service) will signal to lift the Torah. To complete the lift, grab one wooden spool with each hand, slightly lift and pull the Torah over the

edge of the podium, then press down on the spools for leverage. The top of the Torah will rise--as it does, simply lift straight up (so that hands are about eye level – be careful of the overhead light). If able, turn so the text of the Torah is facing the congregation. Then proceed to the seat directly behind the podium. Hold the Torah as it is being dressed. Once complete, the Rabbi/service leader/Gabbai takes the Torah and place it in the Torah Chair. The *Hagbah* returns to his/her seat once the Torah is in place and the congregation is directed to be seated. It is customary to shake hands with those on the Bimah.

It is customary to wear head covering (optional for women) and *tallit* when performing this honor. This honor is reserved for Jewish adults.

G'lilah - Dressing the Torah

The *G'lilah* is called to the Bimah by the B'aal Korah/Cantor (“*Ya'mod Hagbah, Ya'mod G'lilah*”). The dressing of the Torah takes place after reciting the MiShebeirach prayer for healing, the prayer for the deployed, and the *Kaddish* over the Torah.

Please ascend the Bimah and move toward the podium. The Torah is lifted and the *Gabba'im* (people standing on either side of the podium during the Torah service) assist the *G'lilah* with rolling and binding the Torah. The Torah is dressed with the cover and mantel. The silver yad (pointer) is hung on the right spindle, and the crowns placed on each spindle. After this is complete, it is customary to shake hands with those on the Bimah and descend the Bimah.

It is customary to wear head covering (optional for women) and *tallit* when performing this honor. This honor is reserved for Jewish adults.

Prayer for Peace, Country, and Congregation

These honors may be given to anyone. These prayers are usually read after the Haftarah reading. During the Torah service please instruct the readers to listen for the Rabbi/service leader to call for the readers for the prayer for peace, country and congregation. This is the cue to ascend the Bimah.

A prayer book should be taken to the Bimah. The honorees are directed by the Rabbi/service leader when to read the prayer. The reader should move to the microphone and read the prayer. The Rabbi/service leader indicates when the readers should return to their seats.

EDUCATING YOUR NON-JEWISH AUDIENCE

One of the biggest barriers for non-Jewish guests at Jewish life cycle ceremonies is the lack of understanding about what is going on. A great way to educate your non-Jewish relatives and friends is to encourage them to take and read the Temple Adas Shalom Sanctuary Guide, which offers explanations about how our services work, the tradition of Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the prayerbook, etc. Additional information may be offered as appropriate.

You can also include a one-page sheet of Bar/Bat Mitzvah etiquette with the invitation. Sample information to include:

Expected dress code

Appropriate behavior at synagogue

Short explanation of service

Information on length of service. This could also include times for parents to drop off and pick up their kids.

Rules on cell phones, i.e., they must be turned off or on vibrate. *No text messaging during the service.*

Expectations for men, including whether to wear yarmulkes

No photographs are allowed during the service.

Other Tips for Before the Ceremony

Teach non-Jewish family members about the upcoming ceremony of Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Take the time to let non-Jewish relatives understand why your child is preparing so hard for his/her special Shabbat. Help them learn what Torah means, how Jews understand Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Show non-Jewish family members what being Jewish means to your family and to your community.

Invite them to join you when you celebrate a holiday or Shabbat in your home. Allow them to experience another child becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, so they will be more comfortable when their relative stands on the Bimah.

Such preparation can begin a few months before the ceremony or even before a baby is born. But there is another type of preparation. The challenge of an interfaith family raising Jewish children is balancing each parent's own religious tradition and the Jewish tradition in which the child is raised. Emotional and religious dynamics come to the forefront during this time. Questions parents should ask of themselves include:

As the non-Jewish parent, what has been my commitment to my child's Jewish life? Have I helped to instill Jewish values and traditions? Will my participation in the ceremony be a natural extension of who I have been all along?

As the Jewish parent, will my spouse be comfortable participating in rituals that s/he may not believe in, or may not feel apply to her or him?

Has our extended family been supportive and nurturing of our decision to raise our child as a Jew? Will they be comfortable participating in a Jewish service, when they themselves do not choose to be Jewish?

If the answer is no to any of these questions, this can be a wonderful teaching moment, where parents help their child understand that values and actions go hand-in-hand. Clearly, most children desire their parents and family all to celebrate. They want to be "like everyone else." This is an opportunity for parents to teach about the statement one makes when leading Jewish worship (by accepting an honor during services). And the statement is: "I support my child's Jewish choices, my child's Jewish identity."

The parent (or family) who has been uninvolved Jewishly can still celebrate authentically and participate fully in the "secular" aspects of the celebration (party, etc.) and in those aspects of the service which involve "presence" but not "participation." In this manner, the child is honored by both parents (and family) and the child understands the privilege of "being Jewish and behaving Jewishly."

Honest answers will help each family know what level of participation is appropriate for this "coming-of-Jewish-age" ceremony for the child.

It is an extraordinary opportunity for learning and growing when interfaith families approach the time when children become B'nai Mitzvah. Asking a few questions--both of self and of synagogue--and sharing one's Jewish heritage in advance can make the event one of true celebration for every member of the family who attends.

SOME SUGGESTIONS FOR YOUR B'NAI MITZVAH RECEPTION

The religious part of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony occurs in the sanctuary. Choosing to focus on Jewish values during your later celebration will continue to sanctify the day and make it special and memorable. Remember, everything we do with our children teaches them something. Decide as a family what you are celebrating and what this moment in your life means. This decision will help guide you through the rest of the planning stages.

Consider Jewish Values in Your Decision Making

G'milut Chasadim—Acts of Loving Kindness

Tzedakah—Righteousness/Justice/Sacred Giving

Talmud Torah—Study of the Torah

Hidur P'nei Zakein—Honoring the Elderly

Zikaron—Memory

Shabbat—Honoring Shabbat

Tzar Ba'alei Chayim—Non-Cruelty to Animals

Tikkun Hanefesh—Repairing the Self

Tikkun Olam—Repairing the World

Theme

Having a theme for your celebration might help you organize your vision for the day as well as serve as an educational tool for your family and friends. The challenge is to find an appropriate, relevant idea that reflects the Jewish values important to you. You might want to focus on a value or mitzvah addressed in your Torah portion. For example:

B'reishit, the first portion in Genesis, is about Creation. Use the theme of *Tikkun Olam*, “repairing the world,” and incorporate an environmental project into your celebration. Or consider creating or beginning something that will benefit the world in some way. One idea is to establish a food reclamation program in your school that calls upon kids to donate the uneaten, wrapped portions of their lunches (e.g., unopened juice boxes, packaged snacks), which you will take to the local food pantry on a weekly basis.

The Torah portion *Noach* lends itself to the theme of showing kindness to animals. You can find out about species that are becoming extinct, get information about what we can do to help, and distribute it to your guests. You can ask guests to bring old towels, leashes, food, etc., for an animal shelter and then set a time when everyone can go there to help out. This theme is an easy one to feature throughout your entire celebration.

There is a portion in Genesis called *Toldot*, which means “Generations.” You might use this occasion to learn about the generations in your family. Make a family tree and use it as table centerpieces. Contribute to organizations that focus on intergenerational activities.

In the portion *Vayeishev*, Joseph interprets dreams. Use the theme of dreams throughout your celebration. Contribute to organizations that make dreams come true for those in need, such as the Make a Wish Foundation. Purchase *kippot* made by the elderly in workshops supported by Myriam’s Dream, a nonprofit organization that helps older people throughout the world.

The first portion of the Book of Exodus is called *Sh'mot*, meaning “Names.” Be creative. Consider the following: In what ways are names important? What does your name mean? What about other names? What is the meaning of your Jewish name? For whom are you named?

Find out the *g'matria*, the numerical equivalent in Hebrew, of your name and its significance. Does it tell you anything about yourself? Contribute to an organization that helps newborn babies—those who are first being named. Contribute to one of the Holocaust museums or organizations—places that keep alive the names of those who were lost but are not forgotten.

If Moses figures prominently in your portion, consider the theme of leadership. You can learn about other famous leaders. Consider the following: What are the essential characteristics of leadership? From a Jewish point of view, what makes a good leader? If you are having a candle lighting ceremony, ask each person to think of a different leader and the qualities the leader had that he or she would like you to emulate. Contribute to the North American Federation of Temple Youth either in general or to its Leadership Training Programs in particular in order to help our Jewish leaders of tomorrow.

Your Torah portion might speak about blessings. You may decide to think about the blessings you have in your life and try to insure that others who are less fortunate are blessed in similar ways. For example, food is a blessing.

Organize a collection of canned goods and spend some time at the food pantry, shelving supplies. Use canned food as the centerpiece for your tables and then donate the food to the hungry. Involve your guests in cooking food for the local soup kitchen. It is possible to use the temple kitchen for this purpose.

Tzedakah

Tzedakah is an obligation in Judaism: It involves giving of our time and/or money to others. In addition to the Tri-Mitzvah-Ion, some families have chosen to do more.

Some examples:

The invitation sets the tone for the celebration and can let your guests know what is important to you. In lieu of sending an expensive invitation, utilize your desktop publishing skills and make your own. Note on the back of the card that the simplicity of the invitation represents a donation to a *tzedakah* organization that you chose. The thank-you note can also be produced in this way.

Donate 3% of the total cost of food to *Mazon*, an organization that helps feed hungry people nationwide. If you contact them ahead of time, they will send you cards to put on your tables, indicating that you have made a contribution. (www.mazon.org)

In honor of each of your guests, give donations that can make a difference in the lives of others rather than party favors that will cost you the same amount and end up in the trash.

Purchase a tree in Israel (www.jnf.com) for each guest or each candle lighter. Purchase a "mootual fund," a share of a cow on Reform Kibbutz Lotan, for each of your guests.

Check to see if the leftover food can be donated to a soup kitchen. If you are somewhat insistent, many restaurants and caterers will help with this. (e.g. www.mdfoodbank.org)

Make either a financial donation to or purchase something specific for the temple, religious school, or temple library in honor of your becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Entertainment

Include Israeli dancing, not just the *hora*. Perhaps hire someone to teach Israeli dancing.

Consider featuring *klezmer* music as part of the party entertainment. There is also a Jewish storyteller's network in New York City that can provide you with the names of local people who might add some very magical moments to your celebration.

It is possible to do a mitzvah project in place of or in addition to some form of entertainment.

Why not rent a local school gym and sponsor a mitzvah basketball game. Ask friends to support one of the teams and pledge any amount of money for each point scored. Cook for the soup kitchen with your friends. Be creative!

The party should reflect the initial values on which the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony is based.

Don't be afraid to be different.

Candle Lighting (optional)

Make the candle lighting ceremony meaningful and Jewish: use your own theme and be creative. If your theme is Jewish heroes/heroines, ask each candle lighter to think of a specific characteristic of a great Jewish hero/heroine whom they would like you to aspire to as you grow up. Or, if your theme is dreams, ask each candle lighter to think of a dream that he or she hopes the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child will fulfill.

Requesting your family and friends to prepare for this honor ahead of time includes them in the celebration in a meaningful way. Their words for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah may become one of the most treasured aspects of the celebration.

Centerpieces

Choose something simple. Cut flowers can be beautiful and elegant on any table and can be donated to a local nursing home after the party. If you want, choose something that goes with your theme, if you have one. For example, if your theme is Famous Jewish Sports Figures and you decide to use sports equipment as part of your centerpiece, research which organizations can use that sports equipment and donate the centerpiece items to them after the party. Put a card on your table to let your guests know that even the sports equipment is going to be used in a Jewishly meaningful way.

If your theme is Israel, you can purchase trees from the Jewish National Fund and make centerpieces that incorporate the certificates the JNF sends you. Make your own centerpieces. Do you dry flowers? Are you handy with woodworking? Incorporate something personal into your decorations. Can you make a centerpiece out of something that can be donated after the party to people in need?

Keep it Jewish

Begin the meal with *Kiddush* and *Motzi* and end it with the singing of *Birkat HaMazon*. Consider ending the celebration with *Havdalah* if the party will end late Saturday afternoon. Begin with *Havdalah* before a Saturday evening event.

Table Mitzvah Projects

Take every opportunity to provide guests with a way to be involved in a mitzvah. Simple table projects can work well and teach Jewish values in very simple ways. For example, if your theme is Blessings, research organizations that bring blessings to others, and put information about them on the table. Indicate that you will be donating some of your gift money to these groups in honor of the guests at your celebration. Ask each table of guests to discuss the organizations and indicate on a

provided card which one they would like you to support. This will not only get people talking and learning but will undoubtedly raise even more money for some worthy groups that you have selected to support.

If your theme is Learning, Reading, Books, etc., you can purchase books (which you are planning to donate to a children's hospital ward or homeless shelter) to use as table centerpieces. Guests can also be asked to bring children's books to donate. And finally, you can set up a reading station where guests will have the opportunity to make a tape of the storybook he or she brought so that hospitalized children can either use it alone or listen to it while looking at the book.

Celebration Variations

It is most common to have a celebration of some kind at a catering hall or restaurant directly after services. Other models that deserve your consideration include:

- Using the temple social hall for a luncheon for guests or a *Kiddush* for the entire congregation;

- Having a luncheon at home;

- Providing a luncheon for adult guests immediately after services and then having a more informal party for the children later that evening or the next day;

- Inviting everyone to a mystery location and then involving them in a mitzvah project;

- Taking a family trip to Israel;

- Taking a family trip to the town in Europe (or any place in the world) from which your ancestors came and explore your Jewish roots together; and

- Any combination of the above.

CLOSING THOUGHTS

Everything you do to make your Bar/Bat Mitzvah service and celebration personal, filled with your values, will enhance the experience for all. Every celebration need not look as if it has been shaped by the same cookie cutter. Have your celebration reflect who you are and what you believe as an individual and as a family. Make Jewish choices, and don't be afraid to be different. It's worth it! The memories of how you worked together and your incredibly meaningful celebration will last a lifetime. *Put God on the Guest List for Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah.*

Appendix A - Timeline for Bar/Bat Mitzvah

1-2 years before your date

Attend Parent group meetings when the student is entering 6th grade. These are conducted by the RPC leadership in conjunction with the Rabbi, Youth VP, and others.

Request a date for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Dates are assigned at the discretion of the Rabbi/RPC Chair based upon birth date and calendar availability, and are confirmed when the B'nai Mitzvah contract is completed with the Youth VP. We will guide you in choosing a Torah portion that your child will find meaningful.

Because there is so much preparation involved by the Religious Practices Committee, office and maintenance staff, and because our rabbi works part-time, a maximum of two B'nai Mitzvah weekends may be scheduled sequentially.

Decide on which Friday night and Saturday service to use.

Start thinking about Tri-Mitzvah-Lon project.

Sign contract with Temple and remit the B'nai Mitzvah fee.

Reserve the social hall at Temple if it will be used for any celebrations.

If your reception is to be held at a club or hotel, check for availability and book your date.

Check on availability for any part of the celebration which would be essential to your family and child, i.e., song leader/cantor availability for music for the service, caterer, DJ, celebration location, etc.

Make a tentative invitation list.

Beginning today, you and your child should attend and participate in services on a regular basis.

1 year before your date

B'nai Mitzvah families should work cooperatively to help each other with their celebrations.

Select a tutor for your child. The tutor works with your child on his/her Haftarah and Torah portions, as well as any other areas necessary to prepare for the event. A list of eligible tutors can be found in Appendix G.

With the guidance of the Rabbi and tutor, a teen mentor is assigned to your child. These young people are competent and enthusiastic and can serve as valuable role model. They work closely with the adult tutor to coordinate all aspects of the student's learning.

Finalize decisions about photographer, music, videographer and hotel if desired.

6 months – 1 year from date; child should begin receiving tutoring lessons.

6 months before your date

Inform the Religious Practices Committee who, in addition, to the Rabbi will conduct the service, including music or Torah reading.

Meet with the Rabbi to discuss the Torah and Haftarah portions, the child's speech, family participation in and special customizations that you would like for the service, and Tri-Mitzvah-Lon projects. The entire family is invited. Please see chart in back of this guide.

4 months before your date

- Finalize invitation list.
- Continue to customize the service with the tutor, teen mentor, and Rabbi.
- Review plans with your child so that you can be sure he/she is in agreement.
- Order invitations (about 4 months prior).
- Order yarmulkes if desired.
- Order *tallit* for your child.
- Plan/order any decorations/ favors.

3 months before your date:

- Second meeting with the Rabbi (see chart).
- Provide biography and picture to Temple Administrator.
- Address invitations.
- Plan invitation enclosures for out of town guests such as:
 - Maps and directions
 - Hotel information
 - Schedule of events
 - Attire—Your out of town guests will want to know what to pack!
 - Appointments for hair/nails

2 months before your date

- Mail invitations.
- Inform anyone who will have an *Aliyah* and provide a copy of the blessings, if needed.
- Schedule rehearsal (walk-through) with tutor.
- Schedule practice Torah reading for those reading from the Torah other than the student.
- For photography—a member of the RPC should be present.
- Provide tutor and Rabbi with customized parts of service—parent prayers, readings, honors for family members.
- Begin to discuss your Oneg with parent support group.
- Make sure child is writing speech. Send draft by email to Rabbi. Get help if needed.
- Order cake for celebration if desired.
- Plan candle-lighting for reception if wanted.

1 month before your date

- Provide next draft of speech to the Rabbi.
- Have final copies to Rabbi of any materials to be reviewed before you take them to be printed.
- Schedule set up time for Oneg with the Temple Administrator.
- Submit floor plan to the Temple Administrator for table set up for the Oneg (and celebration if holding it at the Temple).
- Arrange for deliveries to Temple with the Temple Administrator. Make sure someone will be there to accept delivery
- Arrange for rehearsal times.
- Notify Religious School classmates of their part in the services.
- The sanctuary holds 156 people with chairs placed in the aisles. If you think more than 156 people will attend the service, arrange for additional seating with the Temple Administrator to

be set up in the social hall. Screens are available at the Temple to maintain the intimacy of the service.

Schedule Oneg set-up day with parent group and discuss food donations.

Take any materials to be duplicated to printer/collate as needed.

Again, review plans with your child.

Final fitting for clothing.

Begin table seating charts if needed.

Make sure hotel has all the out of town reservations—call right before cutoff date to make sure everyone will have accommodations.

Start packing guest hospitality bags (given to your out of town guests when they check-in), party favors as needed.

If you plan to have many friends of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah who are attending without a parent, arrange for transportation from Temple after the service to the party if needed.

1-2 weeks prior: Walk –through in the sanctuary with tutor, Rabbi, and immediate family including the service in Hebrew and English; Torah; and Haftarah readings, speech. Anyone who is reading Torah should practice reading from the scroll itself.

2 weeks prior: Final bulletin to Temple Administrator with Honors worksheet (see Appendix E)

The final week

Reconfirm day, dates, and times for all scheduled events (i.e., caterer, DJ, photographer and times for deliveries to the Temple.

Order Challah.

Rehearse at Temple, confirm number of people expected for the services Friday and Saturday.

Photograph rehearsal.

Set up room for Oneg.

Collate necessary materials.

Let the Temple Administrator know how many bulletins you will need for Friday and Saturday.

Friday/Bar/Bat Mitzvah day

Arrange fresh flowers if using.

Set out foods for Oneg 1 hour prior to service. Have parent group help set out food and clean up afterwards. Have several parents from group leave Friday service after the Rabbi's speech to put out cold foods.

Make sure you have the "scripted" book, speech, and marked Haftarah your child will use at the service.

Make sure you have any additional parent speeches.

Bring any medications, etc. that anyone in family needs.

Shabbat morning—have wine poured for *Kiddush* (one wine cup) and challah on table in Social Hall

Verify you will have enough bulletins for Saturday morning guests – place them in robing room.

Appendix B - Sample Service Only Invitation

Dear _____

As we prepare for [redacted]'s Bar/Bat Mitzvah, we are so grateful for all of the teachers and madrichim who have contributed to his/her Jewish education. We would be honored to welcome you at both the Friday evening service on, and the Saturday morning service on..... Please do not feel obligated to give a present. You have already given so much to our child and we appreciate it!

Join us for the Oneg following Friday's service and for grape juice, challah, and a nosh following Saturday's service. We hope that you can be there to rejoice with us.

Shalom,

Appendix C - B'nai Mitzvah Contract

B'nai Mitzvah Contract and Use of Facilities

8 N. Earlton Rd. Ext., Havre de Grace, MD 21078
(410) 939-3170 fax (410) 939-1159

Name: _____ Today's Date: _____

Address: _____ Main Contact Phone: _____

E-mail: _____ Function date(s): _____

Special instructions/notes: _____

Total costs from list on back: \$ _____

An advance deposit of \$ _____ on (date): _____

Paid in full on (date) _____

Additional Fees \$ _____

Reason for Additional Fees: _____

Persons responsible for payment:

By signing this contract, you are stating that you agree to the terms of this contract; that you will pay the requested fees, that you will be responsible for the condition of the facility and equipment, and any additional fees after the event for any damaged or missing property. All B'nai Mitzvah fees should be paid during the 6th grade year, and your financial obligations must be fulfilled by the time of your simcha unless other arrangements are made with the Treasurer.

Name printed: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Temple Adas Shalom board member responsible for approving arrangements:

Board Member: _____

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Treasurer's signature: _____

cc: Temple Administrator's signature: _____

B'nai Mitzvah Fee:**\$300**

Fee Includes:

Service and Clergy.

Administrative and custodial services.

Social hall/kitchen for a Friday night service.

Table and chairs set up for your Oneg. See below: Additional Family Responsibilities.

Entry into building for photos during normal business hours. Coordinate with the Temple Administrator or RPC.

Friday night childcare. If needed, the Childcare coordinator and/or Youth VP must be informed, one week prior to the event.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Planning Guide.

The Temple's Siddur, Mishkan T'filah, for study, preparation, and ownership.

Print outs of Friday and Saturday templates.

Saturday service programs for the Congregation.

Receipt of deliveries at Temple Adas Shalom during business hours if you cannot be present.

Coordinate with the Temple Administrator.

A Temple Ambassador, if you do not choose your own, to direct guests, and assist with notification of honors. Contact the Religious Practices Committee (RPC).

Rehearsals during normal work hours. Schedule with RPC, Youth VP, Tutor, or Temple Administrator.

The use of plastic table covers, plates, napkin, and flatware, from our pantry, for your Friday night Oneg. (Many families choose to utilize a theme and purchase their own supplies.)

Optional access to cloth table cloths and fabric skirting-prior notification to the Sisterhood is needed.

Family Responsibilities:

- Provide a Floor Plan: at least one week in advance. Social Hall set up generally occurs after 3pm on Wednesday during Midweek. Consult the Temple Administrator.
- Coffee/Tea/Grape Juice/Wine are provided by the synagogue for Friday night Oneg only. Challah should be provided by the B'nai Mitzvah family. Saturday morning, at a minimum, the family will provide grape juice-wine is optional- and challah for all attendees.
- All catering must meet with administrative approval.
- Food should not be stored in the kitchen until two weeks prior to event. Items should be clearly labeled with the family name. Contact the Kitchen supervisor if the B'nai Mitzvah date occurs during or close Pesach.
- Clean kitchen and social hall tables. Following your event, the kitchen is to be left clean. Any utensils/dishes used are to be washed, dried and put away. Countertops are to be wiped down. Items requiring refrigeration are to be put away. Do not store leftovers in dishes in refrigerator, only in disposable containers and must be dated. Trash is to be removed.
- If cloth table clothes and fabric skirting are used, they must be cleaned and returned by the following Friday.

Damage/cleaning fees:

of the kitchen, social hall, and/or equipment

Additional fees, minimum of \$50

depending on the repair/replacement cost and/or labor

Unwashed and/or damaged linens:**Additional fees \$260****Additional Fee for the rental of the Social hall for a luncheon:****\$250**

An additional leasing form "Leasing Conditions" must be signed.

B'nai Mitzvah:

with more than one child being called to the Torah:

Base fee of \$300 plus **\$100/**
per additional child

LEASING CONDITIONS

Hours of Operation: Monday –Saturday 9:00 a.m. to 9:00 p.m. and Sunday 10:00 a.m. to 6 p.m. The reception hall must be cleaned and vacated following the event. Any changes to these rental hours must be approved prior to the reservation and may be subject to a rate adjustment.

Rates: A Full Day Rental is \$250. This agreement will not be considered effective nor will the lease date be reserved until receipt of payment. Checks should be made payable to Harford Jewish Center.

Damage Deposit: There will be a cash damage deposit of \$100.00 for full day rentals for non-members. A walk through of the facility will be conducted before and after the event with the person in charge and a member of the staff. If the facility is left in original condition, the damage deposit will be returned. The deposit will be applied against any damages, discrepancy or violation. In the event that the lessee leaves the facility in a condition that requires more than a standard re-inspection, the lessee will be liable for hourly charges for time expended by the personnel in connection with redemption efforts concerning the facility. This may include but is not limited to contractor coordination, subsequent inspections, accounting procedures, cleaning, etc. Rates charged are currently \$50.00 per hour.

Occupancy/Use: Maximum capacity of the reception hall is 320 chairs or 160 tables and chairs.

Requirements and Restrictions:

The lessee is responsible to leave the reception hall and the parking lot in the same condition as it was prior to use by the lessee.

The lessee is entitled to inspect the reception hall prior to use. The condition of the reception hall will be inspected by a staff member immediately following the event.

This is a smoke-free reception hall. Any evidence of smoking in the facility will result in forfeiture of the entire damage deposit.

Lessee Responsibilities:

The lessee will be held responsible for the conduct of his/her guest.

Any use of the reception hall must be strictly in accordance with Temple Adas Shalom's rules and regulations as well as law and ordinances of the County.

Any sale or resale of alcohol is strictly prohibited.

Any disturbances resulting in a legitimate complaint will be cause of the immediate termination of the Lessee's use of the reception hall. Future use of the reception hall by the lessee to be granted will be subject to any special security provisions deemed necessary by the General Manager.

The Lessee agrees to hold Temple Adas Shalom-Harford Jewish Center and its management and Board of Trustees from any and all liabilities and actions by the lessee and his/her guests resulting from the use of the reception hall and its facilities. Temple Adas Shalom-Harford Jewish Center and its management and Board of Trustees will not be held responsible for any loss or damage to any personal property of any kind.

I have read the above Lease Agreement and the Rental Policies and Procedures and will abide by all stated requirements. I understand that any discrepancy, damage or violation of these requirements by me or any of my guests may result in the loss of my damage deposit, immediate termination of privileges under this lease, and/or suspension of my future use privileges.

Signature of Lessee: _____ Date Rental Fee paid: _____

Appendix D - Meeting with the Rabbi

RABBI BNAI MITZVAH MEETINGS	6 months prior to B/M	3 months prior to B/M	2 weeks to 1 month prior to B/M
participants	Both parents and candidate, siblings, youth vice president optional	One parent and candidate, rabbi	Candidate, rabbi (parents always invited)
purpose	Introductions of family description of mitzvah project, connecting to an actual Torah mitzvah review of next 6 month process remind family of 3 x monthly service attendance;	Finalizing mitzvah project proposal, Identifying Hebrew name and information about the actual Torah mitzvah of project Beginning speech preparation Review 3 times monthly service attendance	Finalizing & rehearse speech Crafting Shabbat services in Mishkan T'filah Review 3 times monthly service attendance Check in about mitzvah project
Homework	Explore mitzvah project possibilities Hebrew names Read <u>Putting God on the Guest List</u> (parents)	Family reads parsha together, family reads haftarah together Candidate fills in the speech outline form, emails to rabbi Rabbi returns outline with comments Speech written	Work on thank you section with family Read speech aloud Read English sections from <i>Mishkan T'filah</i> aloud Eat and sleep well the week prior to the event

Appendix E - B'nai Mitzvah Service Bulletin/Honors

B'nai Mitzvah Service Bulletin/Honors

Check list:

___ Bio (limit to 300 words) with photo (*The bio must be in on the 10th of the preceding month of the B'nai Mitzvah date in order to meet the monthly newsletter deadline.*)

Please complete this with your tutor/Rabbi and submit to Sandy two weeks prior to your service.

___ Honors page: guide below

___ Welcome letter

___ Student's Hebrew name and full English name

___ Names of those remembered, special mentions

___ Special readings/songs that are not in the prayer book, to be read by congregation

___ Estimated number of attendees for services

Name of honor or prayer	Page (in Mishkan T'filah)	Participants *Honors which include contact with the Torah are fulfilled by Jewish adults, who we ask to wear a <i>tallit</i> during the honor.
Opening Prayer (Up to 2)		
<i>Tallit</i> presentation (usually parents)		
Additional readings (e.g. Prayer for peace)		
Ark openers (2)		1. 2.
*Torah carriers (2; may have up to 4)		1. 2. 3. (optional) 4. (optional)
*Generation to Generation (Jewish parents, grandparents; great grandparents, and older siblings)		1. 2. 3. 4.
*Gabbaim (2; at least one from RPC)		1. 2.
* <i>Aliyot</i> : Torah blessing (between 3 and 7)		1. 2.

		3. 4. (optional) 5. (optional) 6. (optional) 7. (optional)
*Torah readers (Page indicates page in chumash, not prayerbook) Torah Portion: _____		1. 2. 3. 4. (optional) 5. (optional) 6. (optional) 7. (optional)
*Maftir		Name of Bar or Bat Mitzvah
*Hagbah Lifting Torah		1. 2. (if necessary)
*Gelilah Binding Torah		1. 2. (if necessary)
Prayer for country (optional)		
Prayer for congregation (optional)		
Prayer for Israel (optional)		
Ark Openers (may be same as 1 st set)		1. 2.
Grandparents prayer (optional)		
Additional prayers or readings (optional)		
Drash (speech about Torah portion)		Name of Bar or Bat Mitzvah
Presentations (from Congregation, Sisterhood, ASTY)		
<i>Kiddush</i>		Name of Bar or Bat Mitzvah
Ambassador		

(This is just a guideline, you can personalize this Welcome Letter.)

Dear Family and Friends,

Your presence adds to the joy of this extraordinary day in our lives, as _____ becomes a Bar Mitzvah. Becoming a Bar Mitzvah symbolizes _____ coming of age, and the beginning of life as a fully participating Jewish adult. This special day marks enormous growth and maturity for _____ and reflects many years of study and practice. This celebration is a time of immense joy for us because it honors _____ hard work and accomplishments, and gives his family and friends the opportunity to share in this important milestone in his life.

During the Saturday service, _____ will be called to read from the Torah and lead the congregation in prayers. The Torah is the sacred scroll containing the five books of Moses. It is read each week by Jews around the world as a guide and reminder to live a life based on Tikkun Olam, repair of the world.

Both Rabbi Ruskin and _____ will guide you through the service. When reading the prayer book, we read from right to left as the Hebrew language does. Please feel free to read along and join in song as we celebrate this joyous occasion.

We are blessed to have friends, teachers, family, and community members here to celebrate one of the most important milestones in _____s life. We are so proud of him.

Parents' names

SPECIAL THOUGHTS AND REMEMBRANCES

We would like to honor _____ who is/are unable to travel to be with us today.

We lovingly remember those who are not physically here with us today, but forever in our hearts...



Appendix F - Oneg Buddy Family Responsibilities

The Buddy's Job

3-2 weeks prior to B'nai Mitzvah

Coordinate the food and beverages with the other parents for Friday night

Baked goods--cakes, cookies, brownies, ect

Other--fruit, chips, candy, sugar-free snack, ect

Drinks--several bottles soda and juice, half and half for coffee

Wednesday immediately preceding B'nai Mitzvah

Make sure the family has had the social hall tables set up

Help with decorating

Verify that family has challah for Saturday morning *Kiddush*

Friday night of B'nai Mitzvah

If family has not hired help, arrive by 7pm to begin. If help has been hired, check in periodically to make sure the following are completed.

Prior to service:

Kiddush wine cup, tray of juice (in little cups), and 2 trays of wine (in little cups) are placed on table in social hall. After service starts, do a rough head count of kids pre B'nai Mitzvah and attendees to make sure there is enough

If challah is provided, it should be covered, or set out the kerug, with coffee choices

Make decaffeinated coffee

Water for tea

Plate up all food on serving trays.

Light decorative candles if any. Plug in trees

After Oneg:

Remove all food from social hall, check with B'nai Mitzvah family to see what should be done with the leftovers

Wash all utensils and dishes and return to proper storage place

Check sanctuary for any trash and remove wine tray from Bima, wash

Clear tables, trash, etc...check what family wants done with decorations

If using the TAS linens for Friday table, clothes need to be washed and returned by early the next week.

(either buddy or family) Table skirts can be put away if clean

Remove all trash from social hall and kitchen to dumpster

Saturday morning of B'nai Mitzvah:

Kiddush set up-wine and challah

Clean up after *Kiddush*

Any food left in the kitchen, should be wrapped tightly and dated.

Buddy families may also be available for any other needed tasks like moving mitzvah project collection box to the party, being in charge of gifts/checks, helping drive home child-guests, providing maps to party venue, driving out of towners to party, etc.

Appendix G - Current Temple Adas Shalom Members who offer their services as B'nai Mitzvah tutors:

Cheryl Conley	410-553-0660
Andy Klein	410-879-3605
Linda Needel	410-652-9159
Stacey McCauley	410-322-1310
Karen Wolkow	410-925-9750
Mark Wolkow	410-515-3499

Rabbi Gila Ruskin can be reached by cell phone 410-599-3003 or email at ima.abba@gmail.com .