



BAR/BAT MITZVAH MANUAL

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Part 1: INTRODUCTION

MAZAL TOV!

Mazal tov on reaching this important stage in the Jewish life cycle, when your student is poised at the threshold of Jewish adulthood and your family is looking forward to the celebration of their upcoming Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony. Bar/Bat Mitzvah is both an enormously rewarding and soul-satisfying experience and at times one that can be filled with some anxiety.

As a result, Temple Aliyah has developed this manual to help our families plan and experience a beautiful and moving celebration, one that will create a lasting impression on the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student and family. It is our hope that this *simcha* will inspire you and serve as a springboard for increased Jewish communal involvement and meaningful Jewish living.

BECOMING A BAR/BAT MITZVAH

What does it mean to become Bar/Bat Mitzvah?

The words “Bat Mitzvah” and “Bar Mitzvah” refer more to the person who becomes a Bar/Bat Mitzvah than to the ceremony that celebrates the occasion. The ceremony simply celebrates the fact that having entered adolescence, the person involved is now becoming responsible for his/her actions and is obligated by Jewish law to observe the tenets of our faith.

In our modern world, we no longer send our thirteen-year-olds off to apprentice to acquire a trade or profession, nor do we marry them off. Instead, a modern Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration offers the family, the student and the community an opportunity to recognize this important milestone in Jewish life. The contemporary Bar/Bat Mitzvah enables our students to demonstrate their acquired skills which are necessary for full participation as an adult member of the congregation. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration empowers the family to affirm its connection with the Jewish past and to express its commitment to a Jewish future. Through it, we convey our desire to maintain a tradition that we have inherited, and our expectation that the student will carry on that tradition for future generations.

The heart of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration is the young person’s demonstration of a variety of skills that mark them as ready to assume adult responsibilities. The experience can be transformative for both the student and the entire family.

What is the role of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and their family in the service?

At Temple Aliyah, we welcome the Bar/Bat Mitzvah into the congregation at a communal service. The service is not designed around the Bar/Bat Mitzvah; instead, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah assumes a variety of roles within an established, traditional service – roles that they will be able to repeat through participation in future services throughout their life. These roles often include reading from the Torah, chanting the Haftarah, leading the congregation in prayer and delivering a *D'var Torah* (literally “a word of Torah”). In this way, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah begins a journey directed at lifelong participation in Jewish communal life amongst their congregational family.

Part 2: PREPARING FOR THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH CELEBRATION

HOW DATES ARE CHOSEN

The Cantor determines the date of your child's celebration. According to the Talmud, a boy becomes a Bar Mitzvah at thirteen years and one day, a girl a Bat Mitzvah at twelve years and one day. The date is calculated on the Hebrew calendar from the date of birth. Since Temple Aliyah is an egalitarian congregation, dates are generally set for age thirteen for both boys and girls. Dates are usually assigned during the student's fourth grade year.

Because the Hebrew calendar is a lunar one, the Hebrew date may be weeks or months away from the secular date. Haftarah portions and levels of difficulty are then checked with the Cantor and the Director of Education. Allowing for Jewish and secular holidays and school vacations, a date is assigned. Generally, these dates are after Labor Day and before the end of June. B'nai Mitzvah are not currently scheduled in the summer. Families must be members in good standing to have a date assigned and to continue to have it reserved.

Although unlikely, it is possible that more than one student will celebrate becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah on a particular date. Other life cycle events in the congregation, such as an *aufuf* (the celebration of an upcoming wedding) or a baby naming may also take place. These multiple *simchas* (joyous occasions) testify to the vibrancy and communal nature of our congregation.

Once a date is assigned to a family, it is automatically reserved on the *religious* calendar of the Temple; you need do nothing further in this regard. Once a date has been assigned, any request for a date change must be made *in writing* to the Cantor. All requests will be considered in a timely fashion.

CELEBRATING IN ISRAEL

Many families consider celebrating a Bar/Bat Mitzvah in Israel, even when receiving training with Temple Aliyah. In recent years, well over a dozen of our young people have held their Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration there. This can be an exciting and deeply educational experience for the entire family. The Cantor can recommend several rabbis in Israel who have worked successfully with members of our congregation.

PREPARING THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH STUDENT

Becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a process, not just an event. Each candidate has been preparing to become Bar/Bat Mitzvah for many years now, both in Religious School or Day School and at home. During the year of the celebration, new material is emphasized and family members are called upon more and more to participate in the preparations. Parents serve as important role models for their children. Families that reinforce Jewish

learning and observance at home challenge an adolescent to aspire to the best our tradition has to offer.

THE B.MITZVAH INSTITUTE

Over the course of the 6th grade academic year, Temple Aliyah will offer a multi-session program for our Bar/Bat Mitzvah candidates and their parents. **This program is designed for both public and private school students.** Its objectives are to:

- Situate the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience within the larger context of Jewish life;
- Provide foundation and scaffolding to add meaning to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience;
- Engage families in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah process ritually, communally, socially, and logistically;
- Develop a cohort of Bar/Bat Mitzvah families.

Most sessions will be on Sunday mornings, with at least one on a Saturday morning (to experience a Shabbat service together), and culminating with a celebratory Friday night Shabbat dinner at the end of the academic year. Families will receive information regarding these sessions near the beginning of the 6th grade year.

INDIVIDUAL TUTORING

Cantor Jamie Gloth oversees the Bar/Bat Mitzvah program, including the training of our candidates, which includes individual Bar/Bat Mitzvah instruction over a period of approximately 12 months. You will be contacted by Adam Zeren, Administrative Assistant, when it is time to begin these studies.

Students and their parents meet first with Cantor Gloth for an initial orientation. Then, for the first several months, students will work one-on-one with Cantor Linda Sue Sohn, our exceptional Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor. Weekly lessons, typically half an hour, will be scheduled by Adam Zeren, Administrative Assistant, taking into account your schedule and Cantor Sohn's. Lessons will not conflict with the regular sessions of Mercaz Aliyah (if your child is enrolled). For the final few months of the student's preparations, they will work directly with Cantor Gloth to complete the training. Cantor Gloth coordinates with Cantor Sohn, continuing to teach where the student left off.

Please note that for any lesson scheduled at 5:00 PM or later, an adult must remain in the building during the entire lesson.

This instruction typically includes learning the *haftarah* specific to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date, the *Maftir* portion from the Torah, and additional parts of the service, including possible additional Torah readings, as determined by the student and Cantor Gloth. Each student is expected to practice regularly and diligently. Please be on time for appointments.

We realize that there are many different learning styles and that each student is unique. If your student has specific learning needs that may impact their Bar/Bat Mitzvah studies, please alert Cantor Gloth so that we can make sure their needs are met as best as possible.

Students will prepare a *D'var Torah*, a brief speech about the Torah portion or *haftarah*, during their sessions with Cantor Gloth. The Cantor will guide each student as they develop their own interpretations of the material, culminating in a *D'var Torah* to be delivered by the student to the congregation at the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration.

PREPARING AS A FAMILY

During the Bar/Bat Mitzvah year, each student's regular attendance at Shabbat morning services is the best way to become familiar with the service and to develop a feeling of ease and comfort in the synagogue. Shabbat morning services begin at 9:15 A.M at Temple Aliyah. We strongly recommend that each Bar/Bat Mitzvah family commit to attending Shabbat morning services at least once per month, during the year prior to the Bar or Bat Mitzvah.

In keeping with our identity as a Conservative egalitarian congregation, we expect all of our Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebrants to wear *tallitot*. Additionally, each Bar/Bat Mitzvah student will learn firsthand how to put on *tefillin*. This will be done as a part of Bar/Bat Mitzvah Institute in the 6th grade year. Though not worn on Shabbat, students are encouraged to obtain their own *tefillin*.

We invite all Bar and Bat Mitzvah celebrants and their families to attend the morning *minyan* (7:00 AM) on the Monday preceding their *simcha*. This is a chance for the student to deliver the *D'var Torah* and, in most cases, read their *maftir* portion in front of a small and friendly group. There is a small breakfast following the service. It is a wonderful experience and we encourage all families to attend!

FINAL RUN-THROUGH REHEARSAL

A full final run-through rehearsal is scheduled for the week prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration. Students and their families will practice the prayers, readings, order and choreography of the service with Cantor Gloth in the Sanctuary. We recommend that other members of the family who will be participating attend as well. Any participant who will be reading a portion from the Torah must review their portion with Cantor Gloth prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. It is preferable that this be done in person, but if this is not possible, then arrangements must be made with Cantor Gloth for a telephone review. You may also choose to have formal photos taken just prior to or immediately following this time as well. Contact Adam Zeren, Administrative Assistant, to schedule.

Part 3: THE BAR/BAT MITZVAH SERVICE

THE MORNING OF THE CELEBRATION

Fifteen minutes prior to Shabbat morning services, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, their parents and immediate family meet in the Cantor's study for final preparations. Parents may wish to present the Bar/Bat Mitzvah with a *tallit* at this time.

Most of our Bar and Bat Mitzvah observances are held on Shabbat morning. Services begin at 9:15 AM. We ask that all guests who will be receiving ritual honors come at the beginning of the service so that our usher may meet them.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family sits in the front of the Sanctuary. Please have your guests join you in the front half of the Sanctuary. This makes it easier for our *gabbaim* as they direct those honored with *aliyot* and other honors to the *bimah* at the appropriate time in the service.

Shabbat morning services may vary in length, but generally conclude by noon. A *Kiddush* luncheon immediately follows services.

FINDING BALANCE

Temple Aliyah religious services are attended by a wide variety of congregants, friends and guests. We strive to be responsive to all of their needs, including those of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student and their family, and to make Shabbat services meaningful to all in attendance. Our Bar/Bat Mitzvah students are encouraged to assume leadership roles in the service and their families are offered various honors. Because our prayer services are public and for the entire community, Bar/Bat Mitzvah families share in service participation, leaving room for other participation by members of the congregation, as well as additional celebrations. We do not lengthen or reconfigure the service to create extra parts.

PARTICIPATION IN SERVICES

The Ritual Committee have worked hard to find the right balance between the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration and the regular congregational service. Specific opportunities (honors) are available for Bar/Bat Mitzvah family participation in our Shabbat morning services, including some Torah reading, *aliyot* (men and women called up to the *bimah* to recite blessings before and after a reading from the Torah), opening and closing the Ark, and leading an English reading. There are some honors that are reserved for Jews, but others that can be given to Jews or non-Jews alike. An Honors Form is included with this manual, and should be filled out in consultation with Cantor Gloth.

CANDY

It is customary for family and friends to shower the Bar/Bat Mitzvah with sweetness, symbolized by the *gentle* throwing of soft candies at the conclusion of the service. **Temple**

Aliyah will provide all candy, unless families prefer that it is not thrown at all.

SHABBAT BROCHURE

The Ritual Committee has prepared a brochure describing the Shabbat morning service which our ushers distribute on the morning of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration. The brochure is updated weekly to note the particular week's *parasha*, Torah and *haftarah* readers, *yahrzeits*, *kiddush* sponsors, and announcement of any congregational celebrations, such as a Bar or Bat Mitzvah, baby naming or *aufruf*. Please understand that this brochure is the only approved handout which may be distributed to the congregation.

LIVE STREAMING

All Shabbat morning services in the Sanctuary are live streamed online. If you have family and friends who are unable to join us in person, they can still be a part of your celebration by watching live on a computer, tablet or smartphone. The live stream is easily found at our website (www.templealiyah.com), or at this [link](#). It is not password protected. A recording from the live stream will be made available to Bar/Bat Mitzvah families upon request at no charge.

SHABBAT DECORUM

Although our ushers do their best to maintain decorum during Shabbat services, we ask your help in assisting us in this matter. All children (our own at Temple Aliyah as well as guests) who are attending a Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration are expected, while in the Sanctuary, to sit quietly, to follow the service in their prayer book and *chumash*, not to roam the halls, and to behave respectfully as they would wish others to behave on the day of their *simcha*.

It is permissible for your guests, especially youngsters with shorter attention spans, to leave the service for brief periods of time. Please be sure they are appropriately supervised. Ushers at the Sanctuary doors will inform them when it is appropriate to reenter the Sanctuary.

Please also remember that in order to maintain the spirit of the day, **no electronic devices - for talking, texting or photos - may be used anywhere in the synagogue on Shabbat.** All mobile phones should be kept silent and out of sight. In the case of health care professionals on-call who must be accessible at all times, cell phones/beepers should be turned to vibrate so as not to disturb fellow worshipers.

A limited number of focus tools, or fidgets, are available for borrowing and located at the entrance of the Sanctuary.

RITUAL GARMENTS, DRESS & CUSTOMS

Guests of all religious backgrounds are welcome at Temple Aliyah's services. Whether or

not they are Jewish, your guest may be unfamiliar with Temple Aliyah's customs and requirements and may appreciate some advance information.

Anyone who goes onto the *bimah* for any honor is requested to wear a head covering. All congregants and guests are encouraged to wear a head covering (*kippah*) whenever they are in the synagogue building. *Kippot* and lace head coverings are available at all services. Many families choose to purchase new *kippot* for the congregation and their guests in honor of their student becoming Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

All Jewish congregants and guests age 13 and older are encouraged to wear a *tallit* at morning services. Most families purchase a new *tallit* for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student to wear during their celebration and at services afterwards. *Tallitot* are available at all services.

Congregants and guests should dress in a manner that is respectful of the sanctity of Shabbat and religious services. **Food, including chewing gum, is not permitted in the Sanctuary during services.**

USHERS

As part of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration at Temple Aliyah, each family of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is asked to assume the responsibility of serving as ushers at a Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration preceding their own *simcha*. Generally, this takes place a week or two prior to your *simcha*. In this way, the family may familiarize themselves with the service, and also be assured of having sufficient ushers on the date of their *simcha*. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah Family Liaison will be in contact with you to confirm the date of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration at which you will be asked to serve as ushers.

The usher's role is to stand in the foyer, greet people warmly, and to hand out and collect *chumashim*. (A member of the Ritual Committee will be responsible for handing out the honors to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family). Ushers are asked to arrive just prior to the start of the Shabbat service (by 9:10 AM) in order to begin these duties and welcome first comers.

Part 4: BAR/BAT MITZVAH CELEBRATION LOGISTICS

INVITATIONS

When planning the wording of your invitations, please remember that our Shabbat services begin at 9:15 AM (*Rosh Chodesh* and *Yom Tov* services begin at 9:00 AM). This is the time that should be written on your invitation. When possible and appropriate, please include directions to Temple Aliyah with your invitation (available in our synagogue office.)

WHO TO INVITE

In many ways, preparing to celebrate becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a group experience for your student and their classmates. In our religious school, as at each of our local day schools, children share with one another the challenges and the excitement of pursuing this significant milestone.

In preparing lists for your celebration, please be sensitive to your student's peers. In the spirit of building community, please try to be inclusive. **If you are intending to invite more than half of the children in your student's grade, we suggest that you invite them all.** (If you are planning to invite only boys or only girls, the same guideline should apply.) This avoids the hurt feelings that may be caused when a few students are not invited along with the rest of the class, and can prevent tension among friends. In most cases, these students have grown up and studied together. It is therefore most appropriate for them to share this milestone together as well.

HOME HOSPITALITY

Temple Aliyah maintains a database of families who live within walking distance of the synagogue. If you have out-of-town guests who require a place to stay within walking distance, please contact Cantor Gloth.

FLOWERS/BIMAH BASKET

It is customary for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family to decorate the Sanctuary *bimah* by sponsoring either flowers or a *bimah* basket. If you choose flowers, in order to insure uniformity for all our *simchas*, flowers for the *bimah* are ordered through Adam Zeren, Administrative Assistant. All flowers remain on the *bimah* until Shabbat is over. You may order other flowers for table centerpieces or decorations as you desire, from any source. Alternatively, choosing a *bimah* basket (which includes a basket of food boxes wrapped in plastic) represents a donation made in your student's honor to Jewish Family and Children's Services Family Table.

KIDDUSH LUNCHEON

As part of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration, it is customary at Temple Aliyah for families to sponsor the *kiddush* luncheon immediately following the service for our congregants and all invited guests. Even if you are planning to celebrate at a separate, private function

thereafter, it is appropriate for your family to attend *kiddush* with your guests before leaving the synagogue for your own affair. This provides a wonderful opportunity for congregants to offer congratulations to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family. [See the "Kiddush Information" sheet included with this manual for detailed information regarding *kiddush* options.]

CATERERS

Only caterers who are certified as kosher by the Va'ad HaRabonim as of the date of your *simcha* are permitted to serve food in our synagogue. Please consult the Temple rules for detailed provisions regarding the preparation and serving of food in our synagogue.

PHOTOS

The taking of photographs is not permitted anywhere in or about the synagogue on Shabbat. If you would like photos of your child at the *bimah*, please be in touch with Adam Zeren, Administrative Assistant, to schedule a convenient time when you and your family will not be disturbed by other events going on at the Temple.

FRIDAY NIGHT DINNER

Many families choose to host a private Friday night dinner at the synagogue for their out-of-town guests. Because this is the start of Shabbat, dinner is preceded by a brief Shabbat evening service at 6:15 PM (lasting approximately one hour), conducted by the clergy. If you are interested in hosting a dinner, please contact Adam Zeren, Administrative Assistant.

PARTY

All Bar/Bat Mitzvah families who plan to have a party after the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration are encouraged to utilize Temple Aliyah's facilities. Before any other programs or events at the synagogue are scheduled on your celebration day, you have the right of first refusal. If you choose to have your party elsewhere, we urge you to have a celebration in honor of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah that does not violate Shabbat or the Jewish dietary laws. As mentioned in the introduction, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony marks an adolescent's acceptance of the commandments. It is only fitting that this be reflected in a celebration that takes the commandments into account. Any assistance that the synagogue can provide in helping you to achieve this goal will be happily given.

THE OMER

The Counting of the Omer (*Sefirat HaOmer*, or *sefirah*) begins on the second night of Passover and continues for seven weeks, until the holiday of Shavuot. According to tradition, it is a time of mourning for Jewish martyrs. Among other things, playing instrumental music and having lavish wedding receptions are prohibited during this period. Some Conservative synagogues observe the entire period, while others observe not at all.

Temple Aliyah observes the above *sefirah* restrictions from the second night of Passover

until Israel Independence Day (5 Iyar on the Hebrew calendar). If your Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration is scheduled during the Omer and you are planning an event at Temple Aliyah, please be aware that no instrumental music will be permitted. Please contact the Rabbi for more information.

COORDINATION AND ASSISTANCE

Many lay and professional leaders in our community are eager to be of assistance to you as you prepare for this wonderful family milestone. A list of important contacts is included with this manual.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

A schedule of current fees for rentals and Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation is included with this manual. All Temple obligations shall be paid in full prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration. Any financial problems, questions, or concerns should be discussed confidentially with the Temple President or Financial Secretary and resolved prior to your celebration.

CONTRIBUTIONS

The giving of *tzedekah* - charitable gifts - on happy occasions is one of the oldest traditions of Judaism. Your family may wish to consider a donation to our congregation in honor of your *simcha*. This can be accomplished through a donation to a synagogue fund or through the purchase of a leaf on the Tree of Life (a form is included in this packet) or through another kind of gift.

You may wish to participate in *Project Mazon*, which asks that you contribute 3% of the cost of your affair to help feed the hungry. This is a custom which continues to spread throughout the country and which has the potential to become a powerful weapon in the fight against homelessness and hunger. We also encourage your child to make a gift to *tzedekah*. We see the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration as an opportunity to initiate your child into the mitzvah of *gemilut chasadim* - acts of loving kindness. Please see the Mitzvah Opportunities included with this manual for more information.

Although as a Temple member there is no additional charge for our clergy to participate in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service, it is certainly appropriate, if you wish, to express your appreciation. Such an honorarium or donation to the Rabbi's or Cantor's Discretionary Funds is a purely personal matter. Should you wish to show appreciation to other members of our staff (i.e. our custodian), a small gratuity is entirely appropriate (but not expected).

MITZVAH PROJECTS

We have long encouraged our Bar/Bat Mitzvah students to choose one or more projects in which they can "give back" or "pay it forward." Students have typically chosen a wide variety of initiatives ranging from raising funds for under-funded charitable

organizations, to donating children's books to a homeless shelter, to raising awareness and promoting increased recycling within our synagogue. Some families choose to create centerpieces for their tables out of books or supplies that they intend to donate. Cantor Gloth is available to help Bar/Bat Mitzvah students and their families select and pursue such projects. See the Mitzvah Opportunities included with this manual.

Part 5: CANTOR'S AWARD

THE AWARD

Designed to incentivize our students, the Cantor's Award recognizes those who attend Shabbat services regularly throughout the year. It also serves as a way to highlight those students who have completed a Mitzvah Project as part of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation.

CRITERIA

The Cantor's Award is presented by Cantor Gloth during the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service to any student who meets the following criteria:

1. Attends Shabbat morning services at least 10 times during the 12 months before the student's Bar/Bat Mitzvah date.
 - At least 8 of these times must be at Temple Aliyah (2 times can be at other synagogues, if appropriately documented)
 - Students will be given 10 cards at the beginning of the year, and can turn these cards in on each week that they attend in order to be counted. If the student is attending a different shul, they can write down the name of that shul and the date that they attended on their card.
 - We are aware that sometimes families have multiple commitments on Saturdays and for a multitude of reasons may need to arrive late or leave early. For an attendance day to be counted, we expect that the student will be present for the minimum of the Torah Service through the sermon (approximately 9:45-11:45 AM). However, we encourage families to attend the entire service to get the full experience of the early and later prayers and to stay for the Kiddush lunch afterwards.

2. Plan and implement a Mitzvah Project
 - The first step of a Mitzvah Project is to pick a cause that you care about and to think of a way that you can address that cause. Some examples might be: if you care about animals, you might want to volunteer at the ASPCA, making dog toys out of used towels, participating in a session with therapy animals; if you play an instrument, you might volunteer your time to play for senior citizens.
 - This project should be something where you really get an opportunity to try something hands-on and should not be exclusively fundraising. Feel free to reach out to Cantor Gloth to talk through your ideas!

Students who complete these two goals will receive a plaque at their Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration, and their name will be added to a permanent plaque outside the Cantor's office.

Part 6: CONCLUSION

ENJOY!

This Bar/Bat Mitzvah manual contains a lot of information, and although it is all important, we understand that it can be overwhelming. We are here to help you; you are not alone. Please do not hesitate to be in touch with the Rabbi, Cantor, Adam Zeren, our Administrative Assistant, or Melissa Rudman, our Executive Director, with any questions or concerns.

Make sure to take some time to relax and enjoy this very special and momentous occasion in the life of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah student and your family. We at Temple Aliyah celebrate right along with you. May we all be privileged to spend many *simchas* together in good health and happiness! **MAZAL TOV!**

IMPORTANT CONTACT INFORMATION

Rabbi Leslie Gordon

Rabbi in Residence

RabbiGordon@templealiyah.com

Cantor Jamie Gloth

CantorGloth@templealiyah.com

Cantor Linda Sue Sohn

Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor

lindasue@templealiyah.com

Melissa Rudman

Executive Director

melissa@templealiyah.com

Adam Zeren

Administrative Assistant

781-444-8522

adam@templealiyah.com

Keith Lewinstein

Temple President

president@templealiyah.com

Bruce Berns

Temple Treasurer

treasurer@templealiyah.com

Temple Aliyah Office

All other inquiries

781-444-8522

GLOSSARY OF 13 IMPORTANT BAR/BAT MITZVAH TERMS

Aliyah (plural: **aliyot**) – Literally, “going up” – The ascent to the *bimah* to say the blessings over the Torah scroll.

Amidah – Literally, the “standing” prayer, the prayer which along with the *Shema*, is the central prayer in Jewish liturgy. The *Amidah* is also referred to as *HaTefilah*, “the” prayer and as *Shmoneh Esrei* (“18,” referring to the 18 blessings originally recited in the weekday *Amidah*).

Bar/Bat Mitzvah – One who has attained the age of responsibility to observe the commandments as an adult Jew. Plural is *B’nai Mitzvah*. Also referred to as B.Mitzvah.

D’var Torah – Literally a “word of Torah”; a brief commentary on the Torah or *Haftarah* portion for the week.

Haftarah – Literally, “completion”; the reading of a selection from the Prophets for a particular Shabbat or festival. The *haftarah* reading is connected thematically to the weekly Torah reading.

Chumash – The Hebrew name for the Five Books of Moses. The word *chumash* means five, referring to *Bereisheet* (Genesis), *Shemot* (Exodus), *Vayikra* (Leviticus), *Bamidbar* (Numbers), and *Devarim* (Deuteronomy).

Maftir – The last section of the weekly Torah portion. The person receiving the *Maftir aliyah* chants the *Haftarah*.

Mitzvah (plural: **mitzvot**) – A commandment or obligation placed upon all *B’nai Mitzvah*.

Parasha – The Torah portion of the week, sometimes referred to as the *sedra*.

Shacharit – The morning service for Shabbat, festivals, and weekdays. It is followed by **Musaf**, the “additional” service in traditional liturgy of Shabbat, festivals, and the New Moon. In the days of the Jerusalem Temple, there was an additional sacrifice offered – on Shabbat, festivals and the New Moon – which followed the daily sacrifice.

Torah – Literally, “teaching” or instruction. Narrowly, Torah refers to the Five Books of Moses. Broadly, Torah includes all Jewish sacred literature and by implication, all of Judaism.

Trope – The notes and cantillation for Torah, *Haftarah* and *Megillot*, which enable a student to read any section of these texts throughout the year.



BAR/BAT MITZVAH CELEBRATION TIMELINE

FOURTH GRADE YEAR

- ❑ Fill out online form and receive official Bar/Bat Mitzvah date letter from Cantor Gloth. Contact Cantor Gloth to discuss any potential date changes as soon as possible.

SIXTH GRADE YEAR

- ❑ Attend Shabbat morning services as a family on a regular basis.
- ❑ Student and parents attend Bar/Bat Mitzvah Institute sessions throughout the year.

ONE YEAR BEFORE DATE

- ❑ Cantor Gloth will contact you to schedule individual Bar/Bat Mitzvah sessions. Parents and student are invited to the first session together. Afterwards, the student will begin meeting weekly with our Bar/Bat Mitzvah tutor, Cantor Linda Sue Sohn.
- ❑ Start tracking Shabbat service attendance and begin thinking about a Mitzvah Project to be eligible to receive the Cantor's Award.
- ❑ Speak with Adam Zeren, Administrative Assistant, regarding reserving spaces for a reception and/or evening affair, as well as Shabbat morning *Kiddush* luncheon.
- ❑ Hire caterer, photographer, entertainment, etc.
- ❑ Reserve block of hotel rooms for guests, if needed.
- ❑ Bring dues current.

SIX TO EIGHT MONTHS BEFORE DATE

- ❑ Meet with Adam Zeren, Administrative Assistant, to review paperwork for Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
- ❑ Purchase *tallit* and head covering for Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
- ❑ Contact Cantor Gloth regarding any family or friends who would like to read from the Torah.
- ❑ Contact Adam Zeren, Administrative Assistant, to schedule run-through Rehearsal with Cantor Gloth.

THREE MONTHS BEFORE DATE

- ❑ Finalize event details (including *Kiddush* luncheon, floral arrangements, etc.) with Adam Zeren, Administrative Assistant.
- ❑ Finalize guest list. When inviting classmates, be sensitive to the feelings of your child's peers, and if inviting over 50% of the class, please include the others as well. If you are planning to invite only boys or only girls, the same guideline should apply.
- ❑ Order invitations.

ONE TO TWO MONTHS BEFORE DATE

- ❑ Student writes *D'var Torah* with Cantor Gloth.
- ❑ Parents meet with Cantor Gloth to discuss honors.
- ❑ Parents and student meet with Rabbi.
- ❑ Contact Adam Zeren, Administrative Assistant, to schedule photo session.

ONE WEEK BEFORE DATE

- ❑ Make final payments for Kiddush.
- ❑ Attend Shabbat morning services with entire family, serving as greeters at the Sanctuary door. Please plan to be there from the beginning of the service (9:15 AM).

THE WEEK OF THE DATE

- ❑ Attend Monday morning *minyán* (7:00 AM) where the student may read from the Torah and will deliver their *d'var Torah*.
- ❑ Bring all supplies, such as *kippot*, centerpieces, etc. to the synagogue. Please label with your name. All items must be delivered to the synagogue by 2:00 PM on Friday.
- ❑ Photos with family (previously scheduled with Adam Zeren, Administrative Assistant)
- ❑ Run-through Rehearsal with Cantor Gloth and those with honors (if possible).
- ❑ Join the congregation for Friday evening services (if they are being held that week).

BAR/BAT MITZVAH CELEBRATION DAY

- ❑ Bar/Bat Mitzvah student and their immediate family meet with Cantor Gloth in the Cantor's Study prior to the service, at 9:00 A.M.
- ❑ *Shep Nachas!*