Bnei Mitzvah Program

“At twelve/thirteen one accepts responsibility for doing mitzvot”

—Pirkei Avot 5:23
Dear Bar/Bat Mitzvah Family:

Mazel Tov! As a family, you are embarking on one of your most significant and meaningful journeys. The entire Beth El family joins us in wishing you heartfelt congratulations.

You are entering a time of wonderful changes – in your relationships, responsibilities, thoughts and bodies. Change can be frightening, but with the help of this supportive community, we will celebrate your changes in spirit of Simhah – joy.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah students are moving from childhood to adulthood, from learning to be responsible to being responsible. As son or daughter of the commandments, you commit yourself to be proud membership in our ancient people. We have given so much to the world; the Torah; the Ten Commandments; the Prophets; a vast literature and culture, sages, saints, scientists, comedians, composers, writers, rock-stars, movie–stars, and scholars.

This now becomes your heritage. Cherish it and add to it with love, joy and commitment.

Again, Mazel Tov, and our very best wishes.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Philip Graubart     Rabbi Avi Libman
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Background
The title of “Bar Mitzvah”– Son of the Commandments or “Bat Mitzvah” – Daughter of the Commandments are Aramaic and Hebrew terms derived from the Talmud as a description of every Jew over the age of thirteen. As Jews we are each endowed with the responsibility to perform mitzvot (commandments) and the opportunity to guide our lives according to the values and ethics of Judaism. This status of Jewish maturity begins on the occasion of a child’s 13th birthday, whether or not they mark this event with a ritual celebration or synagogue service.

Bar and Bat Mitzvah are not verbs. Our children, and each of us, become Bar or Bat Mitzvah. Bar or Bat Mitzvah is not a party and not a ceremony at the synagogue. Being a Bar or Bat Mitzvah is a lasting condition of a Jew’s life. Just as each child is in the process of attaining physical maturity at 12 and 13 years of age, so too does Judaism choose to mark every boy’s and girl’s moral, emotional and spiritual development through this sacred rite at this transitional time in their lives.

Context
Bar and Bat Mitzvah take place within the three Jewish contexts of every child’s life. At Congregation Beth El we prepare and celebrate with each Bar or Bat Mitzvah student in the context of his or her family with consideration of each family’s unique feelings and experiences. We also work with every student and their parents in the context of our synagogue and local Jewish community. This means that Bar and Bat Mitzvah observances take place in the presence of our larger community in addition to each student’s family and invited friends. This synagogue service also has a context, whereby we celebrate our children’s becoming B’nai Mitzvah primarily on Shabbat. This day represents the values and ethics of Judaism and is celebrated as mitzvot through ritual, prayer and Torah study.

Personal & Family Meaning
Congregation Beth El’s goal is to help every family celebrating a Bar or Bat Mitzvah to find meaning and enjoyment in this special milestone. The Rabbis and staff strive to individualize each student’s training and each family’s preparations. It is our hope that every Bar or Bat Mitzvah synagogue celebration also reflects personal connection and participation. In order to achieve this goal, we ask for assistance from our B’nei Mitzvah parents. To that end, we encourage you to attend Shabbat Services as often as possible with your son or daughter in order to become familiar with the ritual and style of our synagogue’s worship.

Objectives
• To develop a positive connection to Judaism, the Jewish people, the Jewish community and the Congregation.
• To study prayer and the rites, rituals, and individual skills related to the Shabbat service and reading of the Torah.
• To provide opportunities for a family experience through sharing social, tikkun, hesed, ritual and learning opportunities.
• To increase the students’ awareness of his/her Jewish identity, to encourage continuing involvement in Jewish learning and Jewish communal activities, including Beth El Teen High, USY, Camp Ramah and other Israel programs and to encourage an ongoing participation in synagogue life through reading Torah, joining the youth choir for the High Holy Days and participating in mitzvah projects with the Tikkun and Hesed Committees.
2. BAR & BAT MITZVAH PROGRAM

Formal Classes

• All B’nei Mitzvah candidates must be enrolled in the Viterbi Torah School, a Jewish Day School, or some other form of Beth El approved Formal Religious and Hebrew Jewish instruction.

• Bar/Bat Mitzvah Synagogue skills are taught during VTS school hours in the 5th, 6th & 7th grades. The following prayers are emphasized in anticipation of the Bar or Bat Mitzvah service:

  - Seder Hotza’at ha Torah
  - Birkhot ha-Torah
  - Birkhot ha-Haftarah
  - Ashre
  - Seder Hakhnasat ha-Torah
  - Kaddish Shalem
  - Ayn Kaylohaynu
  - Aleinu
  - Adon Olam

• 6th grade VTS students meet once a week with Jessie Birnbaum to learn and study Torah & Haftarah Trope (musical cantillation).

• 7th grade students meet on Shabbat from 9am and noon to enhance their prayer skills. Appropriate Shabbat attire is required.

• The Jewish Ethics class meets on Saturday morning with Rabbi Graubart. This class is intended for both students and parents fostering an engaging and spirited discussion. Specific class dates will be made available prior to the first class.

Shabbat Attendance

It is our goal for the Bar or Bat Mitzvah ceremony to be a meaningful ritual for our children and for the family. The best way to understand the meaning of the ceremony is to see it as a link in the great chain of Jewish tradition which connects parents to children and families to families. Attending these services will ensure that all members of the family are comfortable not only with the rituals surrounding the ceremony, but also with the particular practices of our congregation. Shabbat morning attendance is required on assigned class dates.

Tutoring & Resources

• A tutor is chosen approximately 9 to 12 months prior to the ceremony. The family should contact one of the six Beth El tutors (see Important Contact Information for names and numbers in the Appendix, page 14) to schedule lessons. Financial arrangements are to be arranged directly between the family and their chosen tutor.

• Tutoring minimally covers:
  a) The Maftir portion of the Torah
  b) The Haftarah & Associated Blessings
  c) Additional Torah portions of the family’s discretion in concert with an evaluation of the student’s skill level.
  d) Explanation of the Torah and Haftarah portion for the student’s writing of the speech.

• There will be regular communication between the tutor and the B’nai Mitzvah Coordinator about the student’s progress. Families will be notified in the event of any problems.

• Parents and student resources can be found online at:
Parents’ Speech
You will be asked to speak towards the end of the service when called upon by one of the Rabbis. Please prepare a one page double spaced original blessing for your child. If you have any questions regarding the parents’ speech, please contact one of the Rabbis.

Child’s Speech
Each Bar/Bat Mitzvah will write and deliver a D’var Torah (speech), where they become teachers of Torah for the entire congregation. It is the time students will explain what their Torah portion is about and what they have learned from it. They will make meaningful connections to their own lives and to the world today.

Approximately 6 weeks prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, the candidate will meet with Rabbi Graubart. During that time, the speech will be written. We encourage you to begin thinking about your Torah portion beforehand and any thoughts you might want to speak about. (See Appendix, page 15, for speech outline).

The speech that the student recites introduces the Haftarah. It is basically divided into three different parts. The first part of the speech contains the discussion of the prophet. The second part is more an explanation of the thematic connection to the Parasha, Haftarah or Holiday. The third part is the candidate’s interpretation and application of the Parasha and Haftarah themes.

B’nei Mitzvah Shabbaton
Twice this year you will be invited to celebrate Shabbat as a group. This is an opportunity for the family to spend a Shabbat focused on the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student. The two retreats combine worship, learning and social activities. They are wonderful ways for our children to create connections with their fellow classmates as well as parents getting to know one another.

Please mark your calendars now as participation is MANDATORY.

January 10, 2014 – 6th Grade Mini Shabbaton
October 24 and 25, 2014 - Bar/Bat Mitzvah Shabbaton
(Refer to the Appendix, pages 16 and 17, for specific times)

Rehearsal
A dress rehearsal covering all aspects of the family’s participation with Rabbi Libman will be scheduled at 4:00pm on the Thursday immediately preceding the date of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. The rehearsal time is for the immediate family, others honorees do not need to attend. At this rehearsal, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is taken through the service, rehearsing their parts so that there will be no surprises during the ceremony itself. Not only is this time used to ensure that the service will run smoothly, but we also want to make sure that everyone in the family feels comfortable with the service and their role in it.

Still photography is prohibited on Shabbat. Please arrange for your photographer to join you before or after the rehearsal.
Lamed Vav Program
The Lamed Vav Program provides an opportunity for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student to enhance the meaning of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah experience. The Lamed Vav Mitzvot Program is optional and consists of thirty-six (36) mitzvot activities in seven categories. The program is a family initiated experience. Included categories are mitzvot related to Shabbat, Tefillah, Tzedakah – G’milut Hassidim, Holidays, Study and Family as well as ritual Experiences and Jewish Commitment. The outline of the Lamed Vav Program is included in the Appendix, page 18.

It is the student’s responsibility to contact Rabbi Libman to review the completed Lamed Vav form and related activities prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah Shabbat. A special certificate is presented at the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony recognizing the student’s commitment to Jewish life.

Mitzvah Project
A mitzvah project is one of the first responsibilities we are asking our B’nei Mitzvah candidates to take on as new adults in our community. One of the hallmarks here at Congregation Beth El is the commitment to Social Action and Social responsibility. Now, they must also take on the responsibility of Tikkun Olam – repairing the world – as an affirmation of their commitment to Jewish adulthood. We invite them to choose a project (see below for suggestions) and share in our community’s dedication to bringing more wholeness into the world. The entire family has the opportunity to instill this value in the home so that this value continues to be reflected in their lives after the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Rabbis Graubart and Libman have a vision: Congregation Beth El members active in community projects. Sending financial donations is wonderful and very necessary, but actually going out into society and creating a better environment with your own two hands is what it’s all about.

Bar/Bar Mitzvah candidates are certainly welcome to choose their own project. We offer the following list as suggestions; Habitat for Humanity, SOVA – food pantry, Jewish Family Services, American Friends of the Israeli Defense Forces, The Jewish Federation of San Diego, Rachel Women’s Center, and Jewish National Fund.
3. MY SHABBAT

Timeline

Thursday prior
• Student and family attend walkthrough of the service with Rabbi Graubart or Rabbi Libman
• Photos are taken at this time

Friday Evening
• Family arrives 15 minutes prior to the beginning of service at 6:15 PM
• Mother or female family member reads English prayer before the candle lighting (see Appendix, page 21, for English reading)

Saturday Morning
• Family arrives 15 minutes prior to the beginning of service at 9:30 AM
• Parents inform Gabbai as to where those receiving honors are sitting in the congregation
• Parents bless their children and Bnei Mitzvah candidate responds (see Appendix, pages 22-24, for readings)

Honors
You are invited to choose those members of your family and friends whom you wish to honor with aliyot to the Torah or other service involvements. The list of Honors and Torah Blessings can be found in the Appendix section, pages 25 and 26.

Other Celebrations
With such a large and vibrant community, there is always a possibility of other celebrations taking place on the same Shabbat as your son/daughter’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah. An auf ruf, baby-naming, or another celebratory event/speaker may be scheduled. While we will do our best to notify you in advance, there is always the possibility of a last minute simcha. If this is the case, we will work with both families to help coordinate co-sponsorship for that Shabbat.

Seating
In the Sanctuary, the first two rows to the left of the shulchan are reserved for the immediate family of the Bar/Bar Mitzvah (this will be reviewed during the rehearsal). The guests of the family are invited to sit with the rest of the congregation on a first come first served basis. Please be aware and respect that Shabbat regulars who maintain our service each week have seats in the sanctuary to which they are accustomed.

“Shabbat has a flavor of Paradise about it.”
Talmud Brachot 47a
Zmanim: Beth El’s Quarterly Magazine
Several months before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah you will receive a list of questions from our editorial staff and a request for a high resolution photograph for publishing in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah section of our magazine. This will give our community an opportunity to learn more about your children.

All materials should be emailed and pictures should be sent in high resolution JPEG or EPS/TIFF format.

Please see the Appendix, page 28, for past examples.

Bio Essay for Shabbat Leaflet
Approximately six weeks prior to the Bar/Bar Mitzvah you will need to submit an article (350 words max.) to the Publishing Coordinator. Please send an electronic file to aliza@cbe.org.

Format of Essay:
Section #1 – Personal Information

• Tell us who you are, where and when you were born.
• Tell us about your parents – names, what they do, where they were born.
• Tell us about your family – siblings, their ages and/or special relatives
• Tell us about where you go to secular school, your subjects of interest and perhaps what you would like to be when you grow up.
• Tell us about your interests, hobbies, activities.
• Tell us about your Jewish Education – where you go to school (Viterbi Torah School or day school or Hebrew High)

Section #2 – My Parashah

• Tell us the name of your Parashah and include a brief summary of the contents.
• Tell us about the Haftarah – who is the prophet or where the writing comes from.
• Include a brief summary of the Haftarah and the connection to the Parashah.

Section #3 – My Mitzvah Project

• Tell us about your Mitzvah activities or interests, which organization, agency or group you have chosen for your Mitzvah Project.

Please see the Appendix, page 29, for past examples.
Proper Dress for Your Guests

Beth El means “House of God” and should be treated accordingly. Therefore, we hope that your guests will be dressed appropriately and modestly. We can not expect that you have any control over the way your guests dress, but please inform your family and guests receiving honors and coming to the Ark or the bimah before the congregation.

For those receiving any honors, please note our dress code:

Men: No jeans, jacket, and tie preferred. No tennis or running type shoes. Kippah for all men, and Tallit for all Jewish men.

Women: Modest dress. No mini skirts, jeans, spaghetti straps or other clothing allowing the woman to have bare shoulders.

Boys: No tennis or running type shoes, no t-shirts, no jeans, no shorts, tie is preferable, jacket recommended.

Girls: Modest dress, skirt and blouse, no tennis or running type shoes, no t-shirts, no shorts or jeans.

Please advise your guests ahead of time about proper attire.

Please accept these guidelines in a positive spirit for they are designed to enhance the Bar/Bat Mitzvah ceremony. Attention should not be drawn away from your child to people who are wearing clothing designed to attract attention or that demonstrate a casual attitude towards the worship service.

Inviting Classmates, Teachers & Others

When preparing your guest list, it is our policy that all students in your child’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah class are invited to the ceremony. These are students with whom your child has been studying with for at least a year, and they are the children who your child will continue to see in Synagogue and USY programs.

We are sure that you recognize that being left out at this age can be a trying experience for young impressionable minds. By inviting the entire class, you are helping your peers in the parent group feel involved.

Your child’s teachers have been an important part of his/her development. We encourage you to invite those individuals who have worked with your child over the years, including both Jewish and secular teachers as well as tutors, counselors, school administrators, and other special people in your child’s life.

Rabbi Elazar ben Shamu’a taught:

The reverence for your teacher should be as great as your reverence for God.

— Pirkei Avot 4:15
4. SIMCHA CELEBRATION OPPORTUNITIES

Introduction
In keeping with the essence of the tradition of Bar/Bat Mitzvah, we strongly suggest that your celebration be held at Beth El. Our versatile facilities are at your disposal. Because B’nei Mitzvah dates are given out so far in advance, we make the assumption that each family will be using the building during the weekend of their child’s simcha. Generally, six to twelve months preceding your simcha you will be contacted to determine your actual plans so that we may set our annual synagogue calendar.

An auf ruf or baby-naming or other celebratory event or speaker may be scheduled during the morning of your child’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah. We will advise you in advance of any special activities that may be taking place that morning.

If you have any questions, the Executive Director will be pleased to assist you. In order to maintain the laws of Kashrut, only those caterers listed on the “Beth El’s Approved Caterers List” may be used at Beth El.

Friday Night
Shabbat Dinner
Families having out-of-town guests frequently host a private family Shabbat Dinner at Congregation Beth El. There are no addition fees to rent the facility Friday night facility rental is included in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee. Just make the arrangements with the Executive Director and one of the Beth El approved caterers. Your private family Shabbat Dinner will take place after the Congregational Oneg Shabbat.

Oneg Shabbat
It is a custom and tradition at Congregation Beth El that the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family sponsors the Oneg that follows the Kabbalat Shabbat Service. For a sponsored Oneg, the Congregation will provide Challot, wine/juice, several trays of pastries, cakes, & cookies, lemonade/water, linens and assorted paper goods. Fresh fruit and coffee/tea may be added for an additional fee.

Your family will be acknowledged as the sponsors of the Oneg in the Shabbat leaflet, announcements and in the Kolenu. To sponsor the Oneg, please notify the Executive Director at least two months prior to your simcha.

Shabbat Day
Throwing Candy
The Custom of Throwing Candy
It is customary to throw candy at the bar/bat mitzvah when he/she has completed his/her Haftarah, to wish him/her a “sweet” life as he/she makes the transition to adulthood. Even though the candy will be distributed in advance, please save it so it can be thrown at the conclusion of bar/bat mitzvah’s Haftarah.

Candy should only be passed out during the closing of the Haftarah blessings. If you are interested in observing this custom, you must order the candy through Congregation Beth El. No outside candy is permitted.
Kiddush Luncheon (Seudat Mitzvah)
Drawing upon the teaching of a Talmudic sage, the 16th century Rabbi Solomon Luria ruled that a Bar/Bat Mitzvah meal was a religiously commanded festive meal on the same spiritual level as the wedding feast, known as the Seudat Mitzvah. In this tradition, we encourage each family to host a Kiddush Luncheon immediately following the service.

In order to support this tradition, and enhance Beth El’s commitment to community, it is Beth El’s policy that the Kiddush Luncheon must be open to the entire congregation. Because we do not permit private luncheons you are not charged a facility rental fee for the Kiddush Luncheon, however the luncheon must end by 3 p.m. If the luncheon exceeds the time limit, hourly rental fees will be incurred. For a list of approved Kosher caterers, please contact the Executive Director.

Since the Kiddush Luncheon is part of the Shabbat observance, decorations and music should remain appropriate for Shabbat. Out of respect for the congregation, only Israeli or similar Jewish themed music may be played until 1 pm. In addition, still photography and videography is prohibited until this time. At 1 pm, your orchestra/DJ is free to play secular music and still photography and videography may commence.

Sponsored Kiddush
As an alternative to hosting a Kiddush Luncheon, your family is encouraged to sponsor a basic Kiddush through the synagogue (same as the Friday night Oneg). Please contact the Executive Director for more information.

Continue the Celebration
Saturday Evening Celebration at Beth El
The Bar/Bat Mitzvah party is the late 20th century evolution of the Seudat Mitzvah. Congregation Beth El is a fantastic place for your private celebration. The Jacobs Family Community Hall can be decorated in a number of ways, and the Turk Family Plaza is perfect for your cocktail reception To discuss having your private Bar/Bat Mitzvah party at Congregation Beth El, please contact the Executive Director for more information.

Memorialize the Simcha
Tree of Life Leaf or Stone
It has been a long standing tradition to commemorate the B’nei Mitzvah student’s achievement with purchasing a Tree of Life leaf or stone engraved with their name and B’nei Mitzvah date. The leaf or stone is prominently displayed in the foyer of the Jacobs Family Community Hall. Please refer to the order form in this packet.

Photography & Videography
Still photography and videography is prohibited in the Sanctuary on Shabbat. Please arrange for your photographer to join you before or after the Bar/Bat Mitzvah rehearsal. You may also purchase a video DVD of your child’s Bar/Bat Mitzvah by contacting our Executive Director.
5. POST BAR/BAT MITZVAH

After the Bar/Bat Mitzvah
When you become an adult member of the Jewish community, you are expected to continue studying and developing your Jewish identity. Congregation Beth El and the greater San Diego area offer several gateways for you to enter and explore your life as a Jewish adult. Whether it is participating in Beth El Teen High, serving as a madrich at the Viterbi Torah School, volunteering with the Tikkun Committee, spending summers at a Jewish Summer program experience, or USY, you will quickly find that you are able to relate to our vast tradition in a more knowledgeable and mature way. We encourage you to both study formally and to actively participate in your synagogue and community programs.

In the weeks following the Ceremony
- Student continues to attend Torah School or Beth El Teen High
- Student attends USY activities
- Parents complete business transactions with the Executive Director.
- Parents complete business transactions with the caterer.

The 8th & 9th Grade Years
- Student attends Beth El Teen High
- Student attends USY activities, bi-weekly lounge and Kinnus weekends
- Student participates in Mighty Mitzvah Sunday, Rachel’s Women Center dinners and other mitzvah projects

“Turn the Torah and turn it again, you will find everything in it.”
Pirkei Avot 5:22
6. APPENDIX

Important Contact Information

Congregation Beth El
858.452.1734

Speech
Rabbi Philip Graubart – Senior Rabbi .................. 858.452.1734 x227 rabbi@cbe.org

Mitzvah Project/Lamed Vav Project
Rabbi Avi Libman – Associate Rabbi .................. 858.452.1734 x228 rabiavi@cbe.org

Simcha Coordination
Judith Persky– Executive Director ...................... 858.452.1734 x229 exec@cbe.org

Bio/Pictures for Publication
Aliza Shalit – Production Coordinator .................. 858.452.1734 x225 kolenu@cbe.org

Event/Simcha Planning
Eva Blank – Simcha Coordinator ...................... 858.452.1734 x241 eva@cbe.org

To Schedule Meetings with Rabbi Graubart:
Eva Blank – Assistant to Rabbi Graubart ............. 858.452.1734 x241 rabiast@cbe.org

To Schedule Meetings with Judith Persky:
Maria Alvarez – Executive Assistant ................ 858.452.1734 cbe@cbe.org

B’nei Mitzvah Tutors*
Jessie Birnbaum tutoring@jbirnbaum.com
Sharone Kaufmann 858.794.8886
Edna Yedid 858.259.0079
Ariele Gereboff 818.515.4305

* B’nei Mitzvah tutors are not employees of Congregation Beth El. Private arrangements must be made with the tutors. Congregation Beth El is not responsible for enforcing or mediating any arrangements with a private tutor.
D’var Torah Outline for Bar/Bat Mitzvah

Poetry from the Prophets
1. Briefly describe the life and times of the prophet who composed your Haftarah.
2. Summarize the major ideas in your Haftarah.
3. Pick one idea which is especially meaningful to you.
4. Apply that idea to something contemporary – either your life, or in the world at large.

Story from the Torah
1. Write a short bio of the major character in the story.
2. Tell the story in your own words.
3. Pick one important idea from the story.
4. Apply that idea to something contemporary – either your life, or in the world at large.

“When all the children are taught of Adonai, great will be the peace of children.”
Isaiah 54:13
6TH GRADE SHABBATON

at Congregation Beth El

Friday Evening

6:15 - 7:15 pm  Kabbalat Shabbat Services

7:30 - 9:00 pm  Dinner & Program
7TH GRADE SHABBATON

at Congregation Beth El

Friday Evening

6:15 -7:15 pm  Kabbalat Shabbat Service

7:30-8:30 pm  Family Shabbat Dinner

8:30-9:00 pm - Program

Shabbat

10:30 am  Shabbat Service

Noon - Lunch

1:00-1:45 pm  Students meet with Rabbi Graubart & Parents meet with Rabbi Libman

1:45-2:00 pm  Free time

2:00-2:45 pm  Students meet with Rabbi Libman & Parents meet with Rabbi Graubart

2:45-3:00 pm  Closing Song

“As you teach you learn.”

Midrash Tehilim
Lamed Vav Program

Mitzvah of Observing Shabbat (a minimum of 2 per month during 6 months prior to your BM)

☐ 1. Attend Shabbat morning services
☐ 2. Attend Friday night services (a minimum of 1 time per month during the 6 months prior to your BM)
☐ 3. Attend Shabbat dinner at friends or relatives outside your home
☐ 4. Help prepare Shabbat dinner in your own home
☐ 5. Braid and bake a hallah
☐ 6. Light Shabbat candles and recite the blessing
☐ 7. Chant Shabbat Friday night Kiddush
☐ 8. Make Havdalah – explain spices, candle, wine

Mitzvah of Tzedakah

☐ 9. Participate in 2 Community Service activities
☐ 10. Participate in 2 Tikkun Committee projects
☐ 11. Volunteer at Congregation Beth El
☐ 12. Other – honoring the elderly, kindness to animals, welcoming guests, caring for the environment, honoring parents or helping during shiva

Jewish Commitment

☐ 13. Attend 2 USY activities
☐ 14. Continuation of Jewish education this year:
   a. Enrollment in Beth El Teen High
   b. Enrollment in Viterbi Torah School or
   c. Enrollment in Jewish Day School
☐ 15. Continuation of Jewish Education next year:
   a. Enrollment in Beth El Teen High or Jewish Day School
   b. Enrollment in Beth El Confirmation in 10th Grade.
☐ 16. Commitment to Israel (choose at least 2)
   a. Purchase of bond
   b. Visit Israel within 5 years
   c. Contribution to any organization in Israel
   d. Volunteer for Super Sunday
☐ 17. Serve as a Madrich for VTS or volunteer to help with a VTS program while in 9th-12th grade
Jewish Commitment, cont’d.

18. Volunteer to staff a Machar or Kadima event
19. Purchase a tree to be planted in Israel

Mitzvah of Holidays

20. Know the calls of the shofar and demonstrate
21. Fast until Yom Kippur break
22. Demonstrate knowledge of lighting the Chanukkah Candles and 3 blessings
23. Eat a meal in a Sukkah
24. Prepare at least two baskets for mishloach manot on Purim
25. Volunteer at the Purim Carnival

Mitzvah of Study

26. Read one issue of a local Jewish periodical
27. Read a book with Jewish content

Mitzvah of Family

28. Interview your oldest family member and make a family tree
29. Describe a special family ritual object
30. Research the meaning and origin of your Hebrew name

Ritual Experience

31. Demonstrate knowledge of putting on a tallit, tefillin and the appropriate blessings
32. Put a mezuzah on a door and recite the proper blessing
33. Read Torah 3 times during the year following your Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
34. Lead the Torah service 3 times during the year following your Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
35. Read Megillah during Purim community celebration during the year following your Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
36. Participate in High Holiday services by: (choose one)
   a. Attending the USY service
   b. Chant Torah in the main service
   c. Assist with the Family service
   d. Help in the childcare room
MY LAMED VAV MITZVAH DIARY

Name_________________________________         Mitzvah #____________________

Please choose one of the above 36 *mitzvot* and answer the following questions:

1. In doing this mitzvah, the most interesting thing I learned was __________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

2. This is how I felt learning about doing this mitzvah:

3. Names of those who participated with me in this mitzvah:

4. This mitzvah made me aware of:

5. My future goals for this mitzvah are:

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

________________________________________________________________________

Student Signature ____________________________________Date _____________________

“Study leads to action.”

Talmud Kiddushim 40a
MEDITATION FOR SHABBAT CANDLE LIGHTING

For Bar Mitzvah

Gracious God, thank you for the privilege of ushering in another Shabbat of rest and peace.

With a full heart, I thank you for the blessings of motherhood, the wisdom and strength that I have been able to offer my family.

As we prepare to see our son become a Bar Mitzvah and count as an adult in the Jewish Community, I ask your continued blessings upon him and upon us.

May this synagogue which welcomes him to its minyan continue to prosper and grow with every Shabbat, bring its blessings of peace and serenity, joy and celebration to all.

Blessing for candles, in Hebrew

Barukh Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melekh HaOlam,
Asher Kiddishanu B’mitotav Vitzivanu Lihadlik Ner Shel Shabbat.

For Bat Mitzvah

Gracious God, thank you for the privilege of ushering in another Shabbat of rest and peace.

With a full heart, I thank you for the blessings of motherhood, the wisdom and strength that I have been able to offer my family.

As we prepare to see our daughter become a Bat Mitzvah and count as an adult in the Jewish Community, I ask your continued blessings upon her and upon us.

May this synagogue which welcomes her to its minyan continue to prosper and grow with every Shabbat, bring its blessings of peace and serenity, joy and celebration to all.

Blessing for candles, in Hebrew

Barukh Atah Adonai Elohaynu Melekh HaOlam,
Asher Kiddishanu B’mitotav Vitzivanu Lihadlik Ner Shel Shabbat.
Parents Brakhah of Shep’tararu at Bar Mitzvah

**One Parent:**
Barukh Shep’tararu me’onsho shelazeh.

**Other Parent:**
We bless Thee, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has enabled us to raise our son as a capable Jew and an upright human being.

May we welcome this moment with joy, for our son, ________________________________ Hebrew Name(s)
Has now reached the age of Bar Mitzvah.

**One Parent:**
May he stand in wonder at the world,
Seeing himself and all creation
As miraculous expressions of God.

May his heart harbor love for Israel,
Both its land and its people,
And may Jerusalem always be his spiritual center.

**Other Parent:**
May the Torah, before which he now stands,
Be a guide to him all the days of his life.

May his choices reflect loyalty to the Jewish People,
Never threatening its survival,
But, instead, enriching its future.

**Parents Recite Together:**
And so we also pray, O God,
That one day he will bring his own children
To stand before the Torah,
Devoted to our heritage, our People,
And a life of righteous deeds. Amen.
Parents Brakhah of Shep’taranu at Bat Mitzvah

One Parent:
Barukh Shep’taranu me’onsho shelazeh.

Other Parent:
We bless Thee, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the Universe, who has enabled us to raise our daughter as a capable Jew and an upright human being.

May we welcome this moment with joy, for our daughter, ______________________________ Hebrew Name(s)
has now reached the age of Bat Mitzvah.

One Parent:
May she stand in wonder at the world,
  Seeing herself and all creation
  As miraculous expressions of God.

May her heart harbor love for Israel,
  Both its land and its people,
And may Jerusalem always be her spiritual center.

Other Parent:
May the Torah, before which she now stands,
  Be a guide to her all the days of her life.

May her choices reflect her loyalty to the Jewish People,
  Never threatening its survival,
  But, instead, enriching its future.

Parents Recite Together:
  And so we also pray, O God,
That one day she will bring her own children
  To stand before the Torah,
Devoted to our heritage, our People,
  And a life of righteous deeds. Amen.
Bar Mitzvah Pledge
As I stand before the Torah, the most sacred writings of our People,
I announce my desire to accept the responsibilities of an adult Jew.

I pledge to act with the maturity of one who has reached the age of Bar Mitzvah.

I pledge to continue my Jewish Education, because we depend upon
the study of Torah to keep our people alive.

I pledge to participate in activities that enhance and strengthen my Jewish identity.
In that way, I will contribute to my family, my People, and all humanity.

Bat Mitzvah Pledge
As I stand before the Torah, the most sacred of writings of our People,
I announce my desire to accept the responsibilities of an adult Jew.

I pledge to act with the maturity of one who has reached the age of Bat Mitzvah.

I pledge to continue my Jewish education, because we depend upon
the study of Torah to keep our people alive.

I pledge to participate in activities that enhance and strengthen my Jewish identity.
In that way, I will contribute to my family, my People, and all humanity.
B’nei Mitzvah Aliyot & Honors

Open and Close Ark before Torah Service – immediate family

Open and Close Ark after Torah Service ————————————

Tallit Presentation – Parents

Aliyot – (feel free to assign more than one person for each Aliyah)

#4 English name(s) ____________________________

Hebrew name(s) ____________________________

#5 English name(s) ____________________________

Hebrew name(s) ____________________________

#6 English name(s) ____________________________

Hebrew name(s) ____________________________

#7 – parents English name(s) ____________________________

Hebrew name(s) ____________________________

Hagbah (lift Torah) English name ________________

Glilah (wrap Torah) English name ________________

English Readings

Prayer for United States

English name ________________________________

Prayer for Israel

English name ________________________________

PLEASE RETURN TO RABBI LIBMAN BY THE TUESDAY PRIOR TO YOUR SIMCHA
Torah Reading Blessings

Before the Reading

Baruch et Adonai ham’vorach.

Baruch Adonai ham’vorach l’olam va-ed.
(Repeat this line after the congregation recites it.)

Baruch Atah Adonai, elo-heinu melech ha-olam, asher bachar banu mi-kol ha-amim v’natan lanu et Torah-to. Baruch Atah Adonai, noten ha-Torah.

After the Reading

Baruch Atah Adonai, elo-heinu melech ha-olam, asher natan lanu Torah emet, v’cha-yei olam nata b’tochenu. Baruch Atah Adonai, noten ha-Torah.
A Prayer for the United States
Our God and God of our ancestors: We ask your blessings for our country – for its government, for its leaders and advisors, and for all who exercise just and rightful authority. Teach them insights from Your Torah, that they may administer all affairs of state fairly, that peace and security, happiness and prosperity, justice and freedom may forever abide in our midst.

Creator of all life, bless all the inhabitants of our country with Your spirit. May citizens of all races and creeds forge a common bond in true harmony, to banish hatred and bigotry, and to safeguard the ideals and free institutions that are the pride and glory of our country.

May this land, under your providence, be an influence for good throughout the world, uniting all people in peace and freedom- and helping them to fulfill the vision of your prophet: “Nation shall not lift up sword against nation; neither shall they experience war any more.” And let us say: Amen.

A prayer for the State of Israel
Rock and Redeemer of the people Israel:
Bless the State of Israel,
With its promise of redemption.
Shield it with Your love;
Spread over it the shelter of Your peace.
Guide its leaders and advisors
With Your light and Your truth.
Help them with Your good counsel.
Strengthen the hands
Of those who defend our Hold Land.
Deliver them;
Crown their efforts with triumph.
Bless the Land with Peace,
And its inhabitants with lasting joy.
And let us say: Amen.
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Zmanim Questions Samples

Zmanim, Winter 2014-15

DANIELA HIRSCHHORN
Age: 14, Grade 9
School: Whittier Preparatory School
I have been coming to Beth D for 10 years.
My Parishioner: Meisham
I am excited to be with my friends and
read from the Torah.
What I enjoy most about
chanting the Torah:
My passion is to be a Torahist.
My plans for the future:
I want to be a Torahist.

GARY HIRSCHHORN
Age: 15, Grade 10
School: Sierra Academy
I have been coming to Beth D for 10 years.
My Parishioner: Meisham
I am excited to be with my friends and
read from the Torah.
What I enjoy most about
chanting the Torah:
My passion is to be a Torahist.
My plans for the future:
I want to be a Torahist.

MAFRA HIRSCHHORN
Age: 13, Grade 8
School: SAJ
I have been coming to Beth D for 10 years.
My Parishioner: Meisham
I am excited to be with my friends and
read from the Torah.
What I enjoy most about
chanting the Torah:
My passion is to be a Torahist.
My plans for the future:
I want to be a Torahist.

SARAH EFFRESSE
Age: 14, Grade 9
School: Pondicherry Park
I have been coming to Beth D for 5 years.
My Parishioner: Cheri Newcomb Salkin
I am excited to be with my friends and
read from the Torah.
What I enjoy most about
chanting the Torah:
My passion is to be a Torahist.
My plans for the future:
I want to be a Torahist.

GIFTS PRESENTED TO THE B’NEI MITZVAH:

- A trip to the Maldives
- A trip to Israel
- A trip to parts of Europe
- A trip to parts of Asia

* A trip to the Maldives is sponsored by the B’nai B’rith International Foundation.

Zmanim, Fall 2014
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Bio Samples

Sari Berger, Bat Mitzvah January 5th, 2007
Hi. My name is Sari Leah Berger (it is pronounced Sare-ee).

I am twelve years old. I love to read, mostly fiction, but I will read just about anything. I also play the clarinet. My other hobbies include singing, drawing and painting, writing and the arts in general (drama, poetry, etc.)

I attended Chabad Hebrew Academy for elementary school. I transferred to San Diego Jewish Academy for middle school. My favorite subjects are history and literature. My favorite cultures to study about are the Ancient Egyptians and Japan of any era.

I really like Japan and anything to do with it, especially anime, manga, and sushi! I plan on going there someday.

I am the fourth generation to be born in California on my Dad’s side. My great-grandfather on my Mom’s side signed the declaration of independence for Israel and served in the Knesset.

For my Bat Mitzvah Tikkun Olam project, I am taking stuffed animals, art supplies and journals to Children’s Hospital.

My parsha is Vayehi, in the book of Bereshit and my Haftorah is Kings I, 1-12. I hope you enjoy the service.

Cole Parzen, Bar Mitzvah December 16th, 2006
Hello. My name is Cole Parzen. I’m 13 years old and go to High Tech Middle School. It is cool there. I went to Bird Rock Elementary before I started middle school. I study jazz music theory, and, play bass, drums and guitar. I have two cats and a dog. I used to have another dog, but he died when I was 9, which made me very sad. I also have two younger sisters and an older brother. I have lived in San Diego all my life and have been a member of Congregation Beth El for as long as I can remember.

I wish people around the world would stop killing each other. Also, I believe the right to free speech is an essential part of our democracy and society. So, I am giving 10% of the value of the Bar Mitzvah gifts I receive to the American Civil Liberties Union specifically for combating censorship and supporting our right to freedom of speech under the United States Constitution.
Tree of Life Order Form

The purpose of The Tree of Life is to commemorate a life event, or achievement of any kind. Examples are birth announcements, Bar/Bat Mitzvahs, graduations, weddings, anniversaries and other life celebrations. A Tree of Life Leaf can be purchased for $180, and a Rock to be placed beneath the Tree of Life can be purchased for $450. Both will be engraved with your special message.

### STYLE OPTIONS

**Leaf Style Option A**
- Leaf consists of 3 lines at 14.3 PTS
  - Line 1 limited to 22 characters
  - Line 2 limited to 25 characters
  - Line 3 limited to 22 characters

**Leaf Style Option B**
- Leaf consists of 5 lines at 12 PTS
  - Line 1 limited to 16 characters
  - Line 2 limited to 23 characters
  - Line 3 limited to 27 characters
  - Line 4 limited to 23 characters
  - Line 5 limited to 16 characters

**Rock**
- Text for Rock is virtually unlimited. Font size and number of lines will be based on the amount of text.

### LEAVES

**LEAF ONE**
- Style A
- Style B

**LEAF TWO**
- Style A
- Style B

**ROCK**

### PURCHASER & PAYMENT

Name____________________________________________________

Beth El Member?  □ Yes  □ No

Address___________________________________________________________________________________________

Street      City  State  Zip

Phone____________________________   Email ___________________________________________

I/We would like to purchase _____ Tree of Life Leaves($180 ea) or _____ Rocks($450 ea) for a total donation of $_______

□ Check Enclosed (Payable to Congregation Beth El)  or  □ Visa/MasterCard  □ AMEX  □ Discover

Card #___________________________________________  Exp. Date___________

PREPAYMENT OF LEAVES & ROCKS ARE REQUIRED BEFORE ENGRAVING