Dear Parents,

A few years ago, we were working with a conversion candidate who came to see us about a moment that deeply moved her during Shabbat. This particular moment was a turning point for this candidate. She said that witnessing the bar mitzvah – the d’var Torah, leyning (Torah reading) and the community celebrating a child crossing the threshold into adulthood with the community was one of the more moving experiences of her life.

In her short description, this candidate expressed everything about the b’nai mitzvah process and moment on the bimah that we have come to cherish as clergy.

It is an incredible privilege to meet with your children, to get to know them, their hobbies, their passions, to learn together and to craft words of Torah together. The moment when they stand on the bimah, taking ownership of their Jewish identity is truly remarkable, every single time. B’nai mitzvah are not just celebrations about the children, they are celebrations of the power of Jewish parenthood, and of spiritually engaged parenting. All of us at your spiritual home, Adas Israel, wish you strength and so much joy and meaning through this journey.

Though nothing can truly prepare us for the moment when our children stand on the bimah, we hope to create a context and a container for this experience through meeting and learning together. We will work with your family to develop the tools to allow this incredible experience to emerge.

We are grateful to be on this journey with you and your family.

The Clergy Team

Rabbi Lauren Holtzblatt
Rabbi Aaron Alexander
Cantor Arianne Brown
Rabbi Kerrith Solomon
Rabbi Sarah Krinsky
**B’nai Mitzvah @ Adas**

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Our goal at Adas Israel is to create a B’nai Mitzvah program that is a spiritual and religious experience connecting child and family to God, the Jewish people, and to each other.

The Core Values of our Program:

1. Nurturing Environment
   We strive to create a nurturing and caring environment, where we are considerate and sensitive to our students and parents. The environment created through all our interactions should set the tone for the experience of the B’nai Mitzvah itself.

2. Family Involvement
   Parental involvement is key to the success of our program and the entire B’nai Mitzvah experience. We encourage our parents to take an active role in their child’s preparations.

3. Connection to Jewish Community
   We strive to create lasting bonds between students, parents, rabbis, cantors, instructors, staff, and peers during the course of each student’s progress through our program.

4. Putting God on the Guest List
   We emphasize the religious and spiritual significance of the B’nai Mitzvah. Judaism has an amazing way of acknowledging a universal rite of passage – the first steps from childhood toward young adulthood. We entrust the leading of our prayers and rituals, and the interpretation of holy texts, to our B’nai Mitzvah as an expression of this rite of passage. Immersing in the Mikvah is an especially powerful way to invite this holiness into your simcha.

5. Excellence in Preparedness
   The B’nai Mitzvah is a unique opportunity for our students to learn a variety of Judaic skills. We want each of our children to do the best they can and to participate in services to the full extent of their ability. The better prepared our B’nai Mitzvah – the more positive the experience.

B’nai Mitzvah: Its Meaning & Customs

The term B’nai Mitzvah (literally, “son or daughter of the commandment”) is a title given to all Jews upon reaching age 13 to signify that they are now eligible and responsible for the performance of the mitzvot, assuming personal responsibility for their religious, moral, and spiritual behavior. Although no ritual or service is necessary to establish this status, the B’nai Mitzvah celebration, over the past few centuries, has emerged as a way to demonstrate commitment to Judaism. Before the congregation, family, and friends, the young person can now wear a tallit, be called to the Torah for an aliyah, lead the prayers and interpret the weekly Torah portion. Family and friends share the blessings, before and after the reading. In offering this privilege, the congregation says to its 13-year-olds: you are now participating adults in our religious community. B’nai Mitzvah celebration bears witness to the continuity of Judaism embodied in a new generation of committed Jews. Certainly the beginning of a young person’s transition from childhood to responsible Jewish adulthood is a time of celebration. A B’nai Mitzvah celebration occurs as part of our regular congregational services.
If You Have A Question: Whom Do You Contact?

_**Courtney Tisch**_ will be your primary contact for _B’nai Mitzvah _matters. If you have specific questions, please call us at your convenience and the following staff will be delighted to assist you. Please do not hesitate to call the synagogue at 202.362.4433 and ask for:

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B’nai Mitzvah Planning Checklist:

Our B’nai Mitzvah preparation program and timetables make sure that children have more than enough time to prepare for the B’nai Mitzvah. The best way for your entire family to prepare for the B’nai Mitzvah celebration is to attend services regularly.

Please be in touch with Cantor Arianne Brown and Rabbi Kerrith Solomon if there is anything they should know about your student’s learning style or your family’s expectations. If extra time and specially trained tutors are required, please take the time to make any special arrangements to help ensure that your child has a wonderful positive experience.

The B’nai Mitzvah preparation process generally follows the outline on the following pages...

Three Years To Go:

- Attend initial Parents’ Meeting with Rabbi Holtzblatt or Rabbi Alexander, Cantor Brown, Rabbi Solomon, Hazzan Goldsmith and Naomi Malka. You will receive informational materials, checklist, and a b’nai mitzvah application. This parents’ meeting is usually held in January or February.
- Return B’nai Mitzvah Application to Courtney Tisch, B’nai Mitzvah Coordinator, by deadline date on application (usually in February or March).
- Notify Cantor Arianne Brown and Rabbi Kerrith Solomon, Director of Education to discuss learning needs and educational support.
- Receive your child’s assigned b’nai mitzvah date (usually by end of April). If there is an issue with your child’s assigned date, please contact Courtney Tisch, x125. We will do our best to accommodate your family’s needs.
- Reserve the Synagogue for your reception with Food and Beverage Events Manager, Juliana Nieto, x144 (rooms & dates book up quickly and are reserved on a first come-first served basis).

Two Years To Go:

- Attend Kabbalat Parsha Ceremony.
- Attend 5th Grade Shabbaton.
- Begin to prepare for participation in leading parts of various services (i.e. at L’Dor VaDor Shabbat or Junior Congregation)
- Attend Tropé classes in Religious School or Jewish day school.

continued on next page...
Eighteen - Twelve Months To Go:

- Attend 6th Grade Student Shabbaton in the fall.
- Let out-of-town guests know the date of your event.
- Arrange Kiddush and catering (if applicable) with Juliana Nieto, Food and Beverage Events Manager.
- Book photographers, videographers, and entertainment for reception (if applicable). If you plan to hire a photographer for your rehearsal, event or party, you must share the name/contact of the photographer before he/she will be permitted to take photographs within the Adas Israel building. We reserve the right decline access to any photographer if their name/contact has not been shared prior to the event being photographed.
- B’nai Mitzvah Administration Fee of $795 (*effective for 5783 b’nai mitzvah families; amount subject to change) will appear on your synagogue statement. This fee covers all of the administration and planning relating to the b’nai mitzvah. The fee must be paid in full before b’nai mitzvah training can begin.
- The standard Kiddush fund contribution is $2,200 for 2020-21; prices subject to change.
- Attend B’nai Mitzvah Family Retreat (held in the Spring).
- Attend Haftarah Trope classes or sign up for Torah Club.

Fall of Sixth/Seventh Grade:

- Begin Mitzvah / Tzedakah Project – A major component of the B’nai Mitzvah preparation is the student designing their own individualized Mitzvah project to be fulfilled. Ideally, the project will be one which taps into a special skill or interest of the student and provides an opportunity for the most meaningful way for them to contribute to their world. For ideas and suggestions, please see the B’nai Mitzvah page of our website, consult the Education Department, or speak with your assigned rabbi.

Eight Months To Go:

- You will receive information from us regarding scheduling your child’s b’nai mitzvah lessons.
- Juliana Nieto will contact you regarding the Kiddush.
- Order or print invitations (invitations should be mailed ten weeks prior to the simcha). Unless otherwise notified, the starting time on the invitation should list the actual time the service begins: 9:30 am. You can let guests know that they should arrive by the start of the Torah Service, around 10 am. It is appropriate to list the Hebrew date as well as the English one.
- Order Tallit, Tefillin and Kippot (available in the Adas Israel Sisterhood Gift Shop).
- Reserve hotel blocks for out of town guests.

Six - Eight Months To Go:

- Begin studying with the B’nai Mitzvah Tutors (depending on season and vacation schedules).
- Your child will receive their binder with study materials.
- Attend Shabbat morning services.

As part of the preparation for B’nai Mitzvah, the student and their family should become acquainted with the Shabbat service. The b’nai mitzvah ceremony is part of a regular Shabbat service and students who attend synagogue regularly should have an easier time preparing. The more time they spend in the service where their b’nai mitzvah will take place, the more comfortable they will be on their special day.

Each of our B’nai Mitzvah students must attend 10 Shabbat morning services in the same service where the b’nai mitzvah will take place from the time they begin their b’nai mitzvah lessons. B’nai Mitzvah tutors will check in at each lesson to confirm Shabbat attendance.

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Six Months To Go:
- Submit names of Shabbat Kiddush sponsors and submit payment for the Kiddush. The standard Kiddush fee and enhancements must be paid 6 months prior to the B’nai Mitzvah.
- Make final arrangements for reception in our Social Hall with Juliana Nieto.
- E-mail your child’s digital photo and short bio to Courtney Tisch for the Chronicle (Courtney can e-mail you samples of prior Chronicle bios if requested).
- Contact Emma Rosenthal (emma.rosenthal@adasisrael.org) to schedule check-in lessons with Cantor Brown.

Four Months To Go:
- Decide who will be honored with aliyot or other forms of service participation. Call honorees to ask them to participate. Two aliyot are to be saved for other congregants. Submit a draft of honors to Hazzan Goldsmith.
- Identify people who will read Torah and work with Hazzan Goldsmith to reserve and assign readings.

Three Months To Go:
- Announcement in the Washington Jewish Week. If desired, send your child’s photo and a brief biography to David Holzel at: DHolzel@midatlanticmedia.com. Follow this link to fill out the information and upload a high-resolution photo: http://washingtonjewishweek.com/submit-your-celebration/. For questions, please contact David Holzel, Managing Editor at 301.230.6685.
- Schedule family meeting with the Rabbi who will be at your child’s b’nai mitzvah (for b’nai mitzvah child and parents) for the rabbi to get to know the b’nai mitzvah child, to discuss the service, answer any questions and to begin the child on the preparation of their D’var Torah.
- Schedule an appointment two weeks after your initial family meeting for your child to practice their D’var Torah with the rabbi in the location where the b’nai mitzvah will be held. Before this appointment, please e-mail the rabbi a copy of the first draft of your child’s D’var Torah.

Three Months To Go: (cont.)
If you would like to schedule a B’nai Mitzvah immersion in the Adas Israel Community Mikvah for the week before, e-mail Naomi Malka (mikvah@adasisrael.org) for more information and an appointment time.

Eight - Ten Weeks To Go:
- Send your invitations!
- Reminder…make sure you have e-mailed your child’s digital photo & biography to Courtney Tisch.
- Begin preparation of B’nai Mitzvah Shabbat Program Handout (if desired). Contact Courtney Tisch to have a sample document e-mailed to you.

Six - Eight Weeks To Go:
- Confirm attendance at 7:30 am Morning Minyan Service and the final rehearsal on Monday or Thursday before the b’nai mitzvah with your B’nai Mitzvah tutor.
- Arrange date for photography to be taken at Adas Israel with Melissa Adler (melissa.adler@adasisrael.org). Photos can be scheduled on same day as the rehearsal.

Four - Six Weeks To Go:
- Contact your child’s tutor to confirm the list of all participants and their roles in the service or if you have any questions about the Shabbat Service.
- Finalize assignments for Aliyot and Honors with Hazzan Rachel Goldsmith.

MIKVAH PRAYERS

Becoming a B’nai Mitzvah
To be read before preparing for immersion:

I immerse today in celebration of becoming a B’nai Mitzvah – a moment as an act of transition from present to future, from student to leader and teacher, from Jewish childhood towards a new state of responsibility and privilege in the Jewish community. May I be filled with renewed energy and direction to continue on my Jewish path. May God grant me strength, courage, and peace. Amen.

To be read before preparing for immersion:

As my child grows from a child to an adult, teach me how to hold them close and let them go; how to protect them from the world and expose them to the world; how to guide them and trust them. Give me strength, God, and confidence and wisdom. Watch over them, God. Teach them to believe in themselves and to have faith in goodness. Give them courage, humility, happiness and the love of good friends. Bless our family, God, with health, with peace, with joy and with love. Amen.

Parent of B’nai Mitzvah
To be read before preparing for immersion:

As my child grows from a child to an adult, teach me how to hold them close and let them go; how to protect them from the world and expose them to the world; how to guide them and trust them. Give me strength, God, and confidence and wisdom. Watch over them, God. Teach them to believe in themselves and to have faith in goodness. Give them courage, humility, happiness and the love of good friends. Bless our family, God, with health, with peace, with joy and with love. Amen.
Two Weeks To Go:

• Program booklets, if desired, are the family’s responsibility. Before printing, send draft of the booklets to your child’s tutor for approval. Printing is the responsibility of the family.

• All Torah readers must contact Hazzan Rachel Goldsmith to be heard and approved. In person or by phone, two weeks prior to the Bar Mitzvah date.

• E-mail a final copy of D’var Torah to your child’s assigned rabbi with a copy to Courtney Tisch.

• Confirm that you have sent Juliana Nieto your detailed Kiddush sponsorship wording for the Shabbat announcements.

• Candy: We welcome families to participate in the sweet tradition of showering the bar mitzvah with candy! This sweet shower is not a requirement. We only allow individually-wrapped Kosher Sunkist Fruit Gems, which are available for purchase in the Sisterhood Gift Shop. We ask you to limit your candy to two full baskets distributed to the first five rows.

One Week To Go:

• A complete list of all those being honored in the service should be finalized with Hazzan Goldsmith at least one week prior to the Bar Mitzvah date. This list should include full English AND Hebrew names.

• At the Shabbat before the Bar Mitzvah, bar mitzvah student open the Ark before Aleynu at morning service.

Week of B’nai Mitzvah:

Monday or Thursday:

• Attend and participate in Monday or Thursday 7:30 AM morning Minyan. Please arrive by 7:15am. The Bar Mitzvah is invited to lead Ashrei and will be called up for an Aliyah and recite the Torah blessings. They will be invited to wear both Tallit and Tefillin (we provide both, but they are welcome to bring their own). At this time they will also be given their Bar Mitzvah gifts on behalf of the Congregation.

• If you would like to arrange to have a platter after the morning minyan, please call Juliana Nieto, x144.

Week of B’nai Mitzvah: (cont.)

• Hold final rehearsal with your child’s tutor (and with photographer if arranged). Notify Rabbi/Cantor’s office if you would like the rabbi and cantor to be in your photographs. The final rehearsal takes place with either the cantor or with a tutor during the week before or the week of the Bar Mitzvah ceremony. Parents, the student, and siblings who are participating in the service are expected to attend. The rehearsal will take approximately 1 ½ hours. Please dress appropriately for entering the Sanctuary and remember to bring your Tallit and dress shoes to the rehearsal.

• During the Final Rehearsal your child’s tutor will review the service participants, logistics and details and any special requests you might have. Everything that will happen on Friday evening & Shabbat morning. The parts of the service that they will be leading and/or participating in. The “choreography” of the service.

• E-mail a copy of your child’s final D’var Torah by Wednesday.

• Drop off Kippot, Programs, and any other items for the service (if applicable) at the synagogue and leave them at front desk with receptionist before 12 pm. Please do not bring these with you to the synagogue on Shabbat.

• If any of your guests need accommodations, please email requests to inclusion@adasisrael.org.

Mazel Tov! The Big Weekend:

Friday:

Attend and participate in the Shabbat Evening Service.

Saturday:

B’nai Mitzvah Family should be at the synagogue at least 15 minutes before the service begins.

• Put the binder on the Bimah.

• In the Rabbi’s office, the Bar Mitzvah will put on their Tallit before the Shabbat service begins.

• Enjoy!
Administrative Items & Frequently Asked Questions

The celebration of בֵּנוֹיִם is a milestone not only for your family and child, but for the entire congregation. As we assemble to worship on Shabbat, we join in witnessing your child’s passage to the beginnings of Jewish identity and responsibility. We welcome him or her as a fully participating member of our congregational community.

As you begin your preparation for the day, we want to help with your planning in every way that we can. Cantor Arianne Brown oversees our בֵּנוֹיִם Program. For questions regarding the בֵּנוֹיִם Program, please contact Cantor Brown.

Administrative Items:

1. A nice, appropriate photograph and a short bio should be submitted to Courtney Tisch three months prior to the celebration date. Please note that this picture is not submitted to the Washington Jewish Week, but we do submit a list so that your child’s name will appear on the appropriate date. If you would like a photo to appear in the Washington Jewish Week, you must arrange for that personally. (Photos and bios are included on our website and online on the Chronicle page.)

2. Arrangements for the Saturday morning Kiddush refreshments are made with Juliana Nieto six months prior to the b'nai mitzvah.

3. All b’nai mitzvah families are required to contribute a $795 b’nai mitzvah administration fee (effective for 5782, b’nai mitzvah families; amount subject to change) which will appear on your synagogue account the year before your b’nai mitzvah date. This administrative fee covers all of the administration and planning relating to the b’nai mitzvah.

4. All b’nai mitzvah families must remain current in all synagogue obligations to retain their date and receive training. Please contact our Executive Director, David Polonsky if you have any questions regarding your synagogue account.

5. Students must attend the Estelle and Melvin Gelman Religious School or a Jewish day school at least through the year of בֵּנוֹיִם (and preferably through high school).

6. If desired, it is the family’s responsibility to print the b’nai mitzvah program booklets and bring them to the synagogue by noon on the Friday before the b’nai mitzvah. If you are providing personalized kippot or candy, please also deliver them to the synagogue by noon on Friday.

7. Saturday morning בֵּנוֹיִם services in the Smith Sanctuary are live-streamed. You will be sent a link to an audio recording of the service.
Sharing B’nai Mitzvah at Adas Israel, known as a “double”, is a common occurrence. A B’nai Mitzvah originally scheduled as a “single” may be changed to a “double”, as dictated by the scheduling needs of the congregation and our families. The families involved will be notified as soon as possible if any change needs to be made.

Educational Support - Every student prepares to the best of their abilities. We strive for flexibility and creativity in meeting our students’ needs and challenging them to succeed. As stated previously, if your child has any reading or learning needs or requires additional educational support, please let Rabbi Solomon or Cantor Brown know as soon as you receive your assigned date so we can discuss the best ways to prepare your child.

What can you do to assist your child in preparing for the B’nai Mitzvah?
Take an active role in the b’nai mitzvah process. Light candles on Friday night and recite the Kiddush. Attend Shabbat services with your family. Make sure your child is studying the assignments given by his/her tutor. Study with your child. Encourage your child to chant their Torah, Haftarah and the blessings for you. Ask us for help with any of this.

Photographs - You may arrange through Melissa Adler to have your photographer take photos of your child and family on the bimah during the week prior to the b’nai mitzvah celebration (often at your dress rehearsal) or the week after the celebration. No photography can take place in the sanctuaries on Shabbat.

Frequently Asked Questions:

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School & Service Requirements for B’nai Mitzvah:

Because we regard the educational experience as an important community endeavor, it is the policy of Adas Israel Congregation that children attend and fulfill the prescribed program and curriculum of the Estelle and Melvin Gelman Religious School, Charles E. Smith Jewish Day School, Jewish Primary Day School, or some other full-time program of religious education. Exceptions may be made to this policy on an individual basis. Families can submit a Religious School Enrollment Exception Form to Rabbi Kerrith Solomon for individual extenuating circumstances.

Regular attendance at Shabbat Services gives our students the opportunity to become familiar with the prayers and the structure of the services, and the opportunity to develop the skills necessary to participate comfortably in various parts of the service. We recommend that students in Grades 3–5 attend Shabbat Services at least once a month. Students in Grade 6 must attend 10 Shabbat morning services from the time they begin their b’nai mitzvah lessons in the same service (Smith, Traditional Egalitarian Minyan or Havurah) where the b’nai mitzvah will take place. B’nai Mitzvah Tutors will check in at each lesson to confirm Shabbat attendance.

Preparation of Students:

The study of the required materials will begin approximately six months before the assigned date (seven to eight months before if that time spans the summer months or High Holy Days). Students are taught by designated B’nai Mitzvah Tutors, Hazzan Rachel Goldsmith and Naomi Malka, who divide the students between them based on their schedules and time availability. They will contact the family when it is time to begin and set the tutorial time based on the student’s schedule. Lessons are a half-hour in duration once per week. We expect students to practice at home 20 minutes a day, 5 days a week. All students meet with Cantor Arianne Brown for several check-in lessons throughout the process.

If you would like your child to use an outside tutor, please contact us for approval. We want to make certain that your child is taught by a teacher who is experienced and knowledgeable in this area and familiar with our services at Adas Israel. Even when using an outside tutor, our instructors will meet periodically with your child to assess their progress.

Students Learn:

- Friday night and Shabbat morning Kiddush.
- The blessing recited on putting on a tallit.
- The two blessings recited on reading from the Torah.
- The blessings before and after chanting a haftara (portion from the Prophets).
- Their haftara portion.
- Ashrei.
- At least one aliyah from the Torah. If all of the above have been completed, additional aliyot may also be assigned.
- Shabbat morning Torah Service.
- Students will also prepare a Dvar Torah with assistance from the Rabbi assigned to your child’s B’nai Mitzvah service.
We invite and encourage families to hold their “Seudat Mitzvah” celebration at the synagogue. It is an appropriate way to add a Jewish dimension to your simcha. Our beautiful reception halls and fine panel of kosher caterers combine to provide a number of options for your b’nai mitzvah celebration.

In the event of a double b’nai mitzvah or a b’nai mitzvah in two different services on the same Shabbat morning, it is especially important for you to let Juliana Nieto know your plans as quickly as possible so that any conflicts can be resolved and everyone’s needs can be met. Rooms are reserved on a first-come, first-served basis. We want to be helpful in order to make certain that all your needs are met for you to create a meaningful event. Juliana Nieto can answer your immediate questions about the catering policy and will be happy to answer any questions that you may have concerning social hall usage. Please note the following guidelines, which will assist you in your planning. These guidelines are intended to help you and your caterer create a Shabbat atmosphere which is in harmony with Jewish law and your celebration.

1. In order to make you feel comfortable in the synagogue we have liberally interpreted the laws regarding the Sabbath so that live or recorded music is permissible when it is Israeli, Klezmer, or classical music used to create an atmosphere.

2. No pictures may be taken in the Sanctuary or in the congregational Kiddush or public areas on Shabbat. You may arrange, through Melissa Adler, another suitable date and time for pulpit photos (usually accomplished on the day of rehearsal). Photos may be taken at private receptions.

3. Writing is not permissible on Shabbat, including signing photographs or writing in a memory book.

Shabbat Kiddush & Catering Information:

The entire congregation looks forward to celebrating this special simcha with you and your family. We invite you to honor family members and friends by listing their names as sponsors of the Shabbat Kiddush in the Shabbat announcements. Please contact Juliana Nieto, x144 for Kiddush information or questions. Please return the Kiddush form six months prior to your date.

For room reservations for a Shabbat dinner, private receptions/party or for Kiddush information please contact: Juliana Nieto, Food & Beverage Event Coordinator

Evening Receptions/Parties:

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Dear B’nai Mitzvah Families,

Mazel Tov on your forthcoming event. This is a big milestone for your family and we would like to help you with this process. When you make a purchase at the Sisterhood Gift Shop, you are helping to support Sisterhood and the Synagogue. Profits from the Gift Shop are donated to Adas Israel to be used for special Synagogue and Sisterhood projects.

What can we do to help you?

• We can help you select and order B’nai Mitzvah Invitations, at a discount.
• We can help you select your Kippah and place your order for inscribed Kippot.
• We can order any additional items (personalized thank you’s, napkins, etc).
• We have a large selection of Tallitot, both traditional and contemporary, made from wool, silk, cotton and linen. Most of our tallitot are made in Israel by their local designers.
• We have beautiful B’nai Mitzvah gifts at all price ranges. We can help you select gifts for friends and family.
• We can keep a Registry of Gifts for your child so that when your friends and families come in the Shop for gift suggestions, we have your list available.
• We have individually wrapped kosher Sunkist Fruit Gems available for purchase for your simcha.
• And...we have Gift Certificates for purchase. Gift Certificates can be used toward any purchase in the Shop.

How can you find us?
The Adas Israel Sisterhood Gift Shop is located in the lobby of the main entrance to the Synagogue. We are staffed by volunteers and are open Sunday, Monday, Wednesday, Thursday and Friday from 9:30 am–12:30 pm and on Tuesdays from 9:30 am-3 pm and 6-8 pm. We would love to meet you and be of service to you. We can be reached at: (202) 364-2888 or by e-mail at: Adasgiftshop@gmail.com. You can also visit us on the Adas Israel website, www.adasisrael.org and select the Gift Shop tab.

Sincerely,

Diane Keller, Jean Bernard & Susan Winberg
Adas Israel Sisterhood Gift Shop Managers

Invitations:
Use the word “simcha” *(Please share our simcha when...)*
Invite guests “to worship” *(Please join us to worship and celebrate...)*
Use the Hebrew name of your child
Parasha...use the Torah portion assigned to your child
Use the Hebrew date
Jewish symbols...*magen dudai (star), menorah, lions, scrolls, tallit, etc.*
Plant trees in Israel...there are special invitations with lovely JNF-certificates

Music & Entertainment:
Here...it’s fun to lift your child in a chair, siblings too
Klezmer...some Klezmer groups do both social dance music as well as Israeli & Klezmer music
Isreali Dancing

Meals:
Motzi...blessing over the bread. Ask special friends or family to participate
Birkat HaMazon...blessings after meals. Provide booklets for your guests
Kippot...provide kippot if your event is in the synagogue especially for motzei & birkat

Party:
Havdalah...gather guests to recite Havdalah on the dance floor at the beginning of the celebration
Shabbat Dinner...a special intimate dinner for close family and out of town guests before services. Don’t forget challah, candles and Kiddush
Tzedakah...use special cards which note that a contribution has been made in your guest's honor to a charity. Mazon is a good one
Theme ideas...connect to Jewish characters, tzedakah, Israel, holidays, Torah portion, a Jewish value

Gifts:
Israeli Bonds/JNF Tree Certificates...encourage your friends to consider this option
Tzedakah...encourage your child to share a portion of monetary gifts with a favorite charity. Tell your guests which one your child is supporting
Adas Israel...honor your child and the synagogue with a mezuzah plaque or contribution to the B’nai Mitzvah Endowment
Ritual Objects...start a collection of items such as menorahs or Kiddush cups

Lasting Memories:
Scrapbook...make a scrapbook for or with your child to include a family tree, photographs of ancestors, invitation, copy of torah portion & haftarah, rsvp or greeting cards with special messages from guests, newspaper or Chronicle clippings. Let each member of your family dedicate a page