

Dear Bayit Family Member,

Besha'ah tovah (may the birth come in the right time)/Mazal tov on the arrival of your daughter! A naming/simchat bat ("joyous occasion of a daughter" ceremony) is an emotional, powerful and meaningful experience. The flexibility of the ceremony provides families with many options of how to shape it. It can also be a little overwhelming preparing for a ritual and celebration taking place soon after having delivered a baby! Our rabbinic team is here to support you in the planning and to facilitate, personalize and enhance the celebration however we can.

As you anticipate the naming/simchat bat, here are a few things to think about:

1) Preparatory Meeting

Each of our rabbinic team members is happy to meet with you before the baby comes to talk about the upcoming life cycle event(s), the relevant halakhic, pastoral and practical preparations, and anything else on your mind. Don't hesitate to reach out to any of us at any time to make a meeting. Especially for first time parents, we encourage getting together for a broader conversation before the baby comes.

2) Naming vs. Simchat Bat vs. Both

For the purposes of this document, a "naming" refers to a simpler ceremony, typically done after an aliyah to the Torah (Monday, Thursday or Shabbat morning, Shabbat Minhah, or other Torah reading occasions (Rosh Hodesh and other holidays), and including the naming formula and perhaps a melody and a couple of short blessings. A "Simchat Bat" (which some also call a "Zevud Habat", although that may refer to a more specific Sephardic liturgy and ceremony) refers to a more elaborate ceremony which includes the naming formula and also has more honors, liturgical components and speeches.

Some families will do a naming ceremony only, some will do a naming sooner and a separate Simchat Bat later, and others do only a Simchat Bat, incorporating the naming there. We are here to facilitate any of these options.

Please note: if your daughter is not halakhically Jewish by birth, but will be undergoing a conversion, a naming or Simchat Bat may be done prior to the conversion, or it may be done afterwards. Please feel free to reach out to a rabbinic team member to discuss.

3) Timing of Ceremonies

Naming: Families often feel that the naming should be done at the earliest possible opportunity. We are here to support whatever your preferences are, but we encourage families to schedule the naming at a time when family can be present - including not just the father, but the mother and the baby (and other siblings, and grandparents), too! Thus, for example, a baby born at the beginning of the week might have her naming that Shabbat, or even the following Monday. A baby born at the end of the week might have her naming the following Monday, Thursday or Shabbat.

In the event that you choose to do the naming when the mother cannot be present, we suggest considering calling/FaceTiming the mother so she can virtually participate, or recording the naming to share later.

A naming taking place during a Torah reading service can take place on Monday or Thursday morning during our 6:40am Shaharit (Torah reading around 7:10am) or during the 7:50am Shaharit (Torah reading

around 8:15am) or Shabbat morning during the 8:30am Shahrith (Torah reading around 9:30am). You can also arrange your own tefillah.

Simchat Bat: A Simchat Bat can be done at any time. Some families like to do it on or near the 8th day, others choose a convenient time for family and friends (often a Sunday morning). If a naming has already been done, many families will wait weeks or months for the Simchat Bat until they feel more ready to plan and host an event. If a naming has not already taken place, and the Simchat Bat will be the only naming ceremony, most families will schedule a Simchat Bat within a week or two of the birth because of the strong tradition not to share the baby's name until the ritual naming has taken place.

4) Location of Ceremonies

Naming: A naming will take place where that day's tefillah takes place. During the week, that is typically the Lower Level Beit Midrash. On Shabbat, that is the Main Sanctuary.

Simchat Bat: Families generally choose one of two options for Simchat Bat locations. Typically, families will have the ceremony in the Lower Level Beit Midrash or Main Sanctuary followed by a reception in the Social Hall (or smaller room if desired). An alternative, often used for more brief ceremonies, is to have the reception in the Social Hall (or smaller room if desired) and simply invite everyone's attention to the ceremony which takes place during the reception.

5) Ceremony

The ceremony is the heart of the naming/Simchat Bat. It is filled with opportunities to reflect, sing, pray, express gratitude, honor and include family and friends, and personalize the moment. You can find a description of the naming and Simchat Bat ceremony options in a document written by our rabbinic team [here](#). You may also find some articles as well as many programs from prior ceremonies in a folder [here](#).

6) Reception

Naming: For a naming taking place at a Torah service, there is no expectation of any reception. Families may sometimes choose to bring (packaged with widely accepted kashrut symbols) pastries/fruit and/or coffee/juice on a weekday or sponsor a modest congregational kiddush on a Shabbat.

Simchat Bat: A simchat bat reception is a wonderful way to continue celebrating with friends and family over a seudah (festive meal). The Bayit encourages modest receptions. We have a wide range of caterers you can work with. Often, the family will have other friends or loved ones help organize this part in order to alleviate some of the responsibilities in the week before the simchat bat.

7) Points of Contact

As emphasized above, our [rabbinic team](#) is available for you at any time on any of the above matters. If we haven't connected before the baby comes, please contact a member of the rabbinic team after the baby is born. We can help review all of this material, and we are here to help you plan and facilitate the ceremony itself. Feel free to contact the clergy of your choice to plan and facilitate the ceremony with you.

Room usage and catering and other details you can arrange with Richard Langer, our Executive Director (richard@thebayit.org and 718 796 4730 x104).

Thank you for sharing your simchah with us!