

Dear Friends,

You and your child are about to go on a memory-making, joyous, transformational Jewish journey. Your child becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, a person obligated in performing Mitzvot (sacred obligations of our people), is a time that is celebrated by you, your family, and the community of Temple Emanu-El. It also may be a time of some angst both for you and your child. We hope this Handbook, created by clergy, staff and lay leaders will help alleviate some of the anxiety and help prepare you and your family for the excitement and joy of that special day.

At Temple Emanu-El, the celebration of becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah takes place within the context of the congregation's Shabbat services. Our community will join with you and your family in celebrating this moment as together we welcome your child into the adult Jewish world. Becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a process and this process involves the whole family.

Temple Emanu-El is committed to meeting the needs of all children and their specific learning styles, as well as including multi-faith families. We look forward to sharing this journey with you and your child, to answering your questions, to studying together and to working together to make this day a meaningful one for you and your family.

## Timeline

### **Fall of 5th grade:**

- Look at the calendar and think about any dates that you might want for your child's celebration. Temple staff usually assign dates closest to your child's 13th birthday on the Hebrew calendar.
- A Bar/Bat Mitzvah meeting will be held in the Spring of the 5th grade year. Please attempt to participate.
- Encourage your family to attend services routinely so that the service is familiar to your child. This is one of the best ways to alleviate anxiety- knowing what to expect. There is an expectation that your child will attend at least 18 services over the course of the year and it is hoped that you will participate with them. (This includes the 9 or more Shabbat B'Yahad mornings of the religious school).

### **5th-6th grade:**

- Prior to receiving the date for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah please inform the clergy of any concerns re: Hebrew language abilities and other needs.
- Receive date and inform family and friends to save the date
- Begin to think about a possible party/celebration - do you want it at the Temple? What do you envision it looking like? Do you want a DJ or band? Start to contact them now. Book venue. Book photographer, think about flowers etc.
- Your child will be provided with his/her Torah and Haftarah portions.
- Consider if there is anyone in your family who would want to read from the Torah on that date other than your child.

**6th grade year 12 months prior to the date.**

- Attend 4 break-out sessions during Shabbat B'Yahad on topics relating to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah – Parent and child
- Formal training with the Cantor begins!
- Set up weekly - twice weekly meeting times with Cantor and/or ritual coordinator via Calendly (<https://calendly.com/cantormayer/15min>)
- Participate in World Wide Wrap (introduction to T'fillin)

**6th-7th grade -9 months prior to date:**

- Choose Kiddush style-catered? Self-catered with friends and community members?
- If self catering, compile a list of people who will help and ideally one person who will be the chair of the cooking committee for your event.
- Discuss with your child a Mitzvah project to which he/she would be drawn. Suggestions of manageable Mitzvah projects will be shared at Shabbat B'Yahad mornings.
- Your child should be able to chant the blessings before and after the Haftarah.

**8 months prior to the date:**

- Child should be learning the Haftarah (if celebration is on Shabbat morning)

**6 months prior to the date:**

- Meet with Executive Director at the Temple to sign contract, review details and complete set-up process

**4 months prior to the date:**

- Child should be learning Maftir Torah reading

#### **4 months prior to date:**

- Send portions to family who will be reading Torah or leading parts of the service
- Purchase Tallit
- Order Kippot
- Order invitations - if they are being printed

#### **3 months prior to date:**

- Begin working with Rabbi Fel on your English Teaching
- Begin to think about if you would like to have a personalized handout for your guests (Temple has templates which can be found as an addendum to this booklet).

#### **2 months prior:**

- Set up rehearsals with the Cantor at the Temple via Calendly (<https://calendly.com/cantormayer/15min>)
- Schedule family meetings with the Rabbi (he will contact families directly)
- Contact Temple to book photo session in the Sanctuary several days prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah

#### **1 month prior:**

- Assign honors and fill out form to give to the Temple office - see p. 14
- Decide on whom you would like to be the officer of the day to give gifts and announcements -  
<https://www.teprov.org/officers--trustees>
- Obtain a list of Gabbaim from Head Gabbai (Steve Blozer [shammaib@aol.com](mailto:shammaib@aol.com)) and choose three for that day.
- Submit a draft program template to Cantor Mayer for approval.

- Order flowers for bimah (optional)

**1-2 weeks prior:**

- Meet with the Cantor for rehearsals in the Sanctuary
- Week prior. This allows your child to read directly from the Torah at least once or twice prior to the ceremony.
- Bring materials- programs, Kippot, etc. to the Temple
- If you are self catering, start cooking; depending on the size and the extensiveness of kiddush you may want to book the kitchen for 3 days. Contact the Executive Director to reserve the kitchen.

**1 day prior:**

- Bring flowers and any Kiddush supplies to the Temple

**Day of:**

- Make sure your child has two copies of his/her speech, and Haftarah
- Arrive 15 minutes prior to the start of services

**What B'nei Mitzvah Do**

B'nei Mitzvah students spend up to a year in direct study, learning and honing the skills they need to participate actively in a Shabbat morning service. Below is a chart outlining the Shabbat morning service and showing the ways in which our B'nei Mitzvah typically participate. Also, included in the chart are other opportunities for learning and participation that are a part of this process. The items in **bold face type** are those elements students typically master, while those in *italics* are available to those students who wish to pursue further learning and participation, after they have fully mastered the primary components and have checked with the clergy. Following the chart, these elements will be described in more detail.

**Part of Shabbat Morning Service**

Pesukei D'Zimra

Shaharit

**Role for Student to take**

*Lead Pesukei D'Zimra*

*Lead Shaharit*

Torah Service	Lead Torah Service
Torah Reading	Prepare and deliver D'var Torah Take an Aliyah (Maftir) Read the Maftir Aliyah <i>Read additional Aliyot</i> Read the Haftarah
Musaf	<i>Lead Musaf</i>
Weekday/Shabbat pm Torah Reading	<i>If reading Aliyot 1-3 come to Services Shabbat afternoon, Monday and Thursday mornings in week before Bar/Bat Mitzvah to read Torah for the congregation. Helps comfort level before reading on Shabbat morning.</i>

### Breaking Down These Components:

1. ***Leading the congregation in prayer:*** Leading all or a part of our services is a great honor, requiring a significant amount of preparation. Once essential skills are mastered, we encourage our students to take on the role of shaliah tzibbur, on who leads the community in prayer. While the Temple Emanu-El Religious School's curriculum includes a focus on the meaning and content of the different prayer services that constitute a Shabbat morning service, additional learning and preparation are necessary for learning how to lead these services properly. If your child wishes to lead a part or parts of the services, we prefer to begin learning this skill with the Torah Service, followed by Musaf, then Shaharit, and finally Pesukei D'Zimra.

(This priority order differs from the actual order of these parts of the services- the actual order is the one represented in the above chart.)

2. **Preparing a D'var Torah:** Together with the Rabbi your child will study his/her Torah portion or Haftarah and compose a sermon/teaching (1200 words or so) describing the portion and highlighting an aspect that the child found most interesting. Each child will deliver this D'var Torah orally on the Shabbat of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah.
3. **Taking an Aliyah:** The moment of being called to the Torah is one of the most significant ways we recognize a Bar/Bat Mitzvah's ascendance to full membership in the community. We welcome all students to come to the Torah for this honor and recite the appropriate blessings over the Torah.
4. **Reading the Maftir Aliyah:** Each student will learn the basic skills for reading from the Torah, including the trope (musical cantillation) system that is used to chant from this sacred book. Students will put this skill to use minimally by reading the Maftir Aliyah, the additional portion that closes each week's Torah reading.
5. **Reading Additional Aliyot:** We strongly encourage students who have mastered the skill of reading from the Torah to take on additional Aliyot to read the Shabbat of their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. By beginning this additional learning with the first three aliyot, students have a valuable opportunity to participate in the weekly life of our shul, as these Aliyot are read as a 'preview' on the Shabbat afternoon, Monday morning, and Thursday morning over the course of the prior week. Students who read these Aliyot will join us for those services, participating in our Shabbat afternoon and weekday minyanim, and reading from the Torah on those occasions as well. This is a great help to students as they become more comfortable reading Torah.
6. **Reading the Haftarah:** Our Haftarot prophetic passages chanted on Shabbat mornings are, like the Torah, chanted using a system of musical cantillation. Students will learn the special system for reading Haftarah, and apply it to their personal Haftarah portion, as they prepare to chant the Haftarah for the Shabbat of their bar/bat mitzvah.

Additionally, students will learn the special blessings that accompany this reading.

7. **7th Grade Student and Parent Class:** All B'nei Mitzvah students and a parent are required to attend classes with the clergy during the year as part of Shabbat B'yachad.
8. **Friday Night Kiddush:** The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student is strongly encouraged to lead the congregation in Friday night Kiddush.

### **Who is Here to Help**

There are many people in our Temple Emanu-El community who will work together to help your family plan and prepare for celebrating your child's becoming a Bar/Bat mitzvah. Your child's main experience will be with those primarily responsible for their instruction, for this milestone and for helping your family coordinate your celebration . In this section, we will explain the program of instruction with an eye toward introducing you to the people involved and lay out the ways in which other members of our community will help you navigate this process.

### **B'nei Mitzvah Tutoring and Fees**

Your child will work individually with the Cantor and the Ritual Coordinator to learn the Torah reading, Haftarah and prayer skills needed for participating in the Shabbat service that celebrates their Bar/Bat Mitzvah. A \$540 fee is charged to each family to cover the cost of this intense educational experience. The fee covers the costs of study materials and the individual tutoring sessions.

**It is customary that the family of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah sponsor the Kiddush lunch for the community that day. The cost will be discussed with our Executive Director at the orientation program.**

#### **The Cantor:**

The Cantor will meet privately with your child for approximately 10-11 months once to twice a week and guide your child through learning and honing a number of synagogue skills.

- Haftarah trope, the system of cantillation used for chanting the Haftarah (weekly selection from Prophets)

- Chanting the Haftarah your child will read on the Shabbat of their bat/bar mitzvah as well as its attendant blessings
- Torah trope, the system of cantillation used for chanting from the Torah.
- Chanting the Torah readings for the Shabbat of your child's Bar/Bat mitzvah, beginning with the maftir Aliyah and adding more readings as appropriate, as well as reviewing the blessings recited at the Torah.
- The nusah or melodies and skills for leading our congregation in prayer where applicable.

Communicate regularly with your family to keep you apprised of your child's progress.

Discuss with you and your child the options for further participation in services including reading additional Torah portions or leading parts of the service.

Help facilitate any participation in services by family members.

Schedule and attend any rehearsals in advance of your celebration, Be available to discuss any expectations, questions, or concerns you have about your child's instruction.

### **The Rabbi:**

The Rabbi will study the Parashah and help your child prepare a sermon/teaching on the theme from the Torah portion which they will deliver orally on the Shabbat of their celebration.

- Contact you to set up an initial meeting approximately three months in advance of the child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah date.
- Meet regularly with your child to study the Parasha as well as the Haftarah and explore the themes that are most interesting to your child
- Guide your child through the process of crafting a sermon/teaching including settling on a theme, exploring traditional commentaries on the Torah portion and helping to transform your child's ideas into an original composition.
- Assist your child in editing the sermon/english teaching
- Be available to address any questions or concerns you may have.

### **The Ritual Coordinator:**

The Ritual Coordinator will assist with Bar/Bat Mitzvah training by supplementing the work of the Cantor including tutoring of Torah, Haftarah and prayer skills. The Ritual Coordinator is also available to help members of your family and friends who would like to read Torah on the day of your child's simha.

### **The School Staff**

The school staff, in partnership with you, teaches your child much of the information needed for the ceremony and how to lead an adult Jewish life. Our Director of Youth Education and Engagement (DYEE) works closely with the Rabbi and the Cantor to implement a curriculum which prepares our students with the skills they need to succeed in preparing for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration. The DYEE will contact each family a year in advance to share resources and to discuss each family's individual preparation timeline.

### **The Executive Director**

The Executive Director is your contact about fees, use of the building and facilities, kitchen availability and instructions to the maintenance staff. The Executive Director is also responsible for coordinating the many activities happening on any given weekend so that potential conflicts are identified and resolved in advance. The Executive Director reviews all arrangements with caterers and other vendors to make sure our communal standards of Shabbat and Kashrut are maintained.

### **Gabbaim**

Gabbaim hand out aliyot and help to direct people on the Bimah as well as call your honorees to the Torah. A number of volunteers serve in this position. A list will be provided to you if you wish to select the Gabbaim who are most connected with your child and family.

### **The honors/Aliyot**

The Torah service begins and ends with an opening/closing of the ark and a procession of the Torah. You may assign honors for both the opening and closing at the beginning of the Torah service as well as at the end of the Torah service.

For Shabbat morning services, a total of 7 people are called to the Torah (Aliyot) plus a Maftir Aliyah. Your child will receive the Maftir Aliyah prior to chanting the Haftarah and it is the norm that parents receive the seventh Aliyah so that they are on the Bimah to recite a parental prayer for their child after they are called to the Torah. Two of the Aliyot are reserved for use by the congregation and are not available for assignment by the family. Your child's simha is celebrated within the Temple community, and thus two Aliyot are set aside for others in the community. Please submit a list of those who are participating in the service to the Cantor at least 2 weeks in advance. We ask that you provide the English and Hebrew names of those to be honored. Hebrew names consist of the individual's proper name followed by the father's and mother's Hebrew names. For example, David son of Abraham and Sarah would be called to the Torah as David ben Avraham v'Sarah. For ark openings as well as Hagbah and G'lillah (lifting and dressing the Torah English names suffice as these people are not called by name to their roles. You can also assign a loved one to hold the Torah on the Bimah (this usually would be for 20 minutes after the Torah is dressed). Younger siblings or relatives are invited to lead other prayers as well such as Ashrei (psalm 145), Ein Keloheinu and Aleinu.

### **Temple Emanu-El's Keruv Policy**

Temple Emanu-El is appreciative of interfaith families who have chosen to educate their children in Judaism and who, following the Bar/Bat Mitzvah celebration, will support their children as adult members of the Jewish community. While only a Jewish parent can receive an Aliyah and say the blessing, both parents/partners are invited up to the Bimah together, stand with their child for the Mi Shebeirakh prayer and offer a blessing for their child together.

You may choose to honor a person who is not Jewish to lead the congregation in an English prayer, such as the Prayer for Our Country.

### **Friday Night Shabbat Dinner**

While not a required part of B'nei Mitzvah celebrations at Temple Emanu-El, we strongly encourage you and your family and guests to welcome Shabbat together and to celebrate Shabbat by having a

festive meal either at the Temple or in your own home (or the home of a family friend). In addition many Temple Emanu-El families join the congregation at services on Friday night. We love to have our B'nei Mitzvah students lead the Kiddush at this service. If you have family or friends who would like to lead Kabbalat Shabbat, please let us know in advance. This is a wonderful way to begin your Shabbat of celebration.

## Ruah Shabbat - The Atmosphere of Shabbat

1. **Kippah and Tallit** - Kippot must be worn by all males at all times in the synagogue building, during both the religious services and the reception following services. Women are encouraged and supported in wearing Kippot and Tallitot. All Jewish men should wear a Tallit in the Sanctuary. To receive an honor, a Tallit must be worn.
2. **Photography** - While no photographs may be taken in the synagogue building or on the grounds on Shabbat, arrangements can be made with the Executive Director for a special sitting in the Sanctuary on a different day.
3. **Recording** - No audio or video recording may be made or used anywhere in the synagogue or on its grounds on Shabbat.
4. **Cell phones** - The use of electronic devices is not permitted on Shabbat.
5. **Smoke-free** - The synagogue building is a smoke-free environment at all times. On Shabbat, there is no smoking anywhere on the grounds.

## Logistics

1. **Deliveries** - All deliveries must be completed before noon on Friday. Nothing may be brought into or removed from the Temple during Shabbat . Please consult with the Executive Director to make these arrangements.
2. **Kiddush** - The Bar/Bat Mitzvah family sponsors the Kiddush on Saturday mornings for the entire congregation. This gathering after services speaks to the communal nature of this occasion. Specific instructions about this and other food preparation can be obtained from the Executive Director. If financial hardship

would prevent you from honoring this tradition, please consult with the Executive Director. Under no circumstances may any food be brought into the Temple without first checking the Clergy to ensure Kashrut.

3. **Flowers on the Bimah** - It is the custom at Temple Emanu-El for B'nei Mitzvah parents to provide flowers on the bimah. Please consult with the Executive Director for further details.
4. **Shabbat Services Program** - Many families produce a handout to be read on Shabbat morning. This program can welcome guests, describe the services, list those being honored, thank those who have helped, and remind guests of Shabbat decorum. If you need guidance, please consult with the Cantor for program templates. **Please provide the Cantor with a draft copy 4 weeks prior to the celebration.**
5. **Shabbat Services Decorum** - People may enter the Sanctuary at all times. However, there are some moments when it is courteous to wait in the back of the Sanctuary so as not to disturb those who are praying. During the Amidah (pp. 159-165 & pp. 185-191), we ask that people wait in the rear until congregants have finished their individual prayers before entering the pews. During the Dvar Torah, or sermon, we ask that people find seats in the back of the Sanctuary.
6. **Handicapped Access** - We welcome all who come to Temple Emanu-El. People who need elevators and special assistance should consult the Executive Director in advance of your celebration. Arrangements can be made for handicapped accessibility.

We hope that the information in this booklet is informative and helpful. Please reach out to any of the senior staff at the Temple if you have any concerns or questions. We are all here to help.

Mazel Tov!



## HONORS SHEET - SHABBAT MORNING

Date:	Name of Bar/Bat Mitzvah:
Parashah:	
Siblings Names:	Parents Names:

<b>PETIHA #1</b> (Open/close ark)		
	<b>ENGLISH NAME</b>	<b>HEBREW NAME</b>
COHEN (1st Aliyah)		
reader		
LEVI (2nd Aliyah)		
reader		
SHELISHI (3rd Aliyah)		
reader		
REVI'I (4th Aliyah)	<b>RESERVED FOR CONGREGATION</b>	
reader		
<b>HAMISHI</b> (5th Aliyah)		

reader		
SHISHI (6th Aliyah)	RESERVED FOR CONGREGATION	
reader		
SHEVI'I (7th Aliyah)		
reader		
MAFTIR (Haftarah reader)		
reader		
HAGBAH (Lifting the Torah)		
GELILAH (Dressing the Torah)		
TORAH HOLDER		
OPTIONAL READINGS	Prayer for our Country or Prayer for Peace	
ASHREI		
PETIHA #2 (Open/close ark)		
EIN KELOHEINU / ALEINU		
ADON OLAM	RESERVED FOR TOT SHABBAT/ JR. CONGREGATION/ RELIGIOUS SCHOOL	

KIDDUSH / MOTZI	
-----------------	--

Student Benchmark Document

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AJfUKZjfDCnDIpaEnkDzGGdBfxempn\\_-2kLPUt1B6s/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1AJfUKZjfDCnDIpaEnkDzGGdBfxempn_-2kLPUt1B6s/edit)

Vendors Document

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1R0CHHcPJ8flmn3IFwGh9fZfUjLEu4udC0JY0Vl71i74/edit>

Membership and Financial Requirements

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/10HnYCRdVh8ggPHQip9Dy6f\\_t9jWi2p6j3WQ9SOgfbKk/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/10HnYCRdVh8ggPHQip9Dy6f_t9jWi2p6j3WQ9SOgfbKk/edit)

Room Rental Agreement

<https://docs.google.com/document/d/1SyVND4lnjxs26biCOKDtsqXzsfXmBpLPnCtVTUqTwpM/edit>

Shabbat Kiddush Contract

[https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Vg\\_KtlWhRHPUOqtvbV9IA61\\_D715sYxj9yfj4zzChuU/edit](https://docs.google.com/document/d/1Vg_KtlWhRHPUOqtvbV9IA61_D715sYxj9yfj4zzChuU/edit)

Templates for Personalized Handout

- Alicia's\_booklet\_Paul's Edits.docx
- Harry and Charlees temple program with edits.docx
- BNEI MITZVAH EXAMPLE 1.docx