



**Temple Shalom of Newton**

**Bar/Bat Mitzvah Family Participation Instructions**

**May 2018 Rev**

Mazel Tov on this fabulous Simcha (special occasion)!

This guide will help you through the process of becoming a Bar or Bat Mitzvah at Temple Shalom.

## **Preparing to become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah**

### **Tutoring**

Temple Shalom has three regular tutors who work with most of our students to prepare them to become a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. We have additional tutors that support our students with special needs or need a specialized approach due to extenuating circumstances. Our goal is to match the right tutor with each student to make sure the student and family feel supported through the tutoring process. Please let the B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator know if you have any concerns along the way.

For most of our students, tutoring begins approximately 20-24 weeks (not including summer or school vacations) before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date. Most students receive 20 weeks of tutoring but some will receive more if the Bar Mitzvah Coordinator feels there is more necessary due to starting Hebrew late, identified difficulty with Hebrew or language acquisition, or a late 7<sup>th</sup> or 8<sup>th</sup> grade Bar/Bat Mitzvah. The clergy and tutors work together to make sure everyone gets what they need and will adjust the number of sessions accordingly. We do have a tutor available over the summer to add sessions if you want them. We will be in touch when we know the schedule.

Students are expected to know most of their prayers before they start tutoring but will spend the first few weeks practicing the prayers. They spend the majority of their lessons on learning their Torah and Haftarah portions. We expect students to practice their prayers, Torah portions and Haftarah portions 5-6 times per week for 20-30 minutes at a time. Please let the B'nai Mitzvah Coordinator or your child's tutor know if you need advice on helping your child practice.

### **Extra Practice and Small Group Hebrew**

In coordination with Mincha (Temple Shalom's 6<sup>th</sup> and 7<sup>th</sup> grade program), students will have opportunities to practice their prayers during T'filah services during MINCHA. There may be an opportunity to participate in a Boot Camp with Cantor Halpern during MINCHA as well.

SHACHARIT will also be offering 7<sup>th</sup> grade Hebrew for the 2018-2019 school year that parents can opt to sign their children up for to help boost Hebrew skills in 7<sup>th</sup> grade. The goal of 7<sup>th</sup> grade Hebrew is to practice prayers and start learning modern spoken Hebrew. Please be in touch with Liz Shiro, [Lshiro@templeshalom.org](mailto:Lshiro@templeshalom.org) if you are interested in signing up for 7<sup>th</sup> grade Hebrew.

## **Mitzvah Tools**

MitzvahTools is our B'nai Mitzvah Tracking software. You will receive an email from MitzvahTools with a link for activating your account. If you do not receive this, please contact Andrea Levinsky. To log on, go to <http://mitzvahtools.com/>. Your username is firstname-lastname and your password was set by you when you activated your account. If your child has an email address, please share it with Andrea Levinsky so she can create an account for your child.

When you log on, you will see a "Manage Children" page. Click on your child's name to go to their profile.

There are several sections of the profile that we will be using:

1. In the top left, you will see a box called **[Child's Name] 's Honors**. This is where you will let us know who you want to honor at your child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah.
2. On the top right, you will see a box called **[Child's Name] 's Appointments**. Here you will find a list of all of your child's clergy appointments. When an appointment is scheduled, you will receive a Google Calendar invitation with the type of the appointment, date, time, duration, and who the appointment is with. The system is automatically set up to send you an email one month, one week, and one day before the appointment to remind you.
3. Under the honors section, you will see **[Child's Name] 's Tasks**. If you click on this, you will find your child's recordings of their Torah and Haftarah portions, link to prayer practice website, and any other tasks that your tutor assigns.
4. Under the Appointment section, you will see **[Child's Name] 's Team**. This is a list of who has access to your child's Mitzvah Tools account. You can find everyone's contact information by clicking on their name.
5. On the bottom left you will see the **[Child's Name] 's Team Message** section. This is where the clergy, tutor, Temple Educators, and you will be able to communicate about your child's progress. To add a message (which will go to everyone on your child's team), simply click on the words **[Child's Name] 's Team Message**.
6. On the bottom right is the **Resources** section. If you click on the word "**Resources**," you will be able to access many important documents such as PDFs of all of the prayers, the Bar and Bat Mitzvah Guide, information about the Mitzvah Project, and information about ushering.

### **Mitzvah Project**

As part of becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah at Temple Shalom, we ask our students along with the help of their family to pick a B'nai Mitzvah project that is meaningful and worthy of their time. This mitzvah project should be student driven and parent supported. The project could be one chosen specifically in connection with becoming a B'nai Mitzvah and/or the continuation of a project you are already involved in via school or another organization. Mitzvah projects can be done in the 6<sup>th</sup> or 7<sup>th</sup> grade year based on your family's schedule and project. You will discuss your plan at the first family meeting.

There is also an opportunity to participate in group volunteering experiences through Temple Shalom instead of choosing to do an individual project.

Each B'nai Mitzvah family can choose whether they'd like to do an individual project and/ or participate with a group for approximately 2-3 hours.

All social action opportunities are being coordinated by Education Program Manager Andrea Levinsky. Please contact her at [alevinsky@templshalom.org](mailto:alevinsky@templshalom.org) if you have questions or suggestions. See the back of this page for descriptions of each event. Please note these volunteer opportunities require at least one adult family member to participate with the B'nai Mitzvah child.

Please register for these events here:

<https://www.templeshalom.org/form/Family%20Volunteer%20Opportunity>.

### **Service Attendance Requirement**

To help prepare to become Bar/Bat Mitzvah, we ask our students and their families to attend three Friday night Shabbat services, three Saturday morning Shabbat services and one Torah study session. Students will receive a card to fill out with the dates of service attendance in their tutoring letter. Any clergy or educator may sign these cards. Once the card is filled out, the student should turn it into the B'nai Mitzvah coordinator and they will receive a special gift.

### **List of meetings with approximate timing**

There are several meetings that your family or just your child will be attending through the process of becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. You will receive two letters, one a couple of months before tutoring begins and one a few months before the actual Bar/Bat Mitzvah which will specify when these meetings are but here is a rough timeline.

1. ~4 weeks before tutoring: Family Meeting to discuss the expectations of the family and get to know the Rabbi officiating your day
2. ~13 weeks before Bar/Bat Mitzvah: Dvar Torah planning meeting (family encouraged)
3. ~8 weeks before: Prayer and Torah portion check with Cantor (student only)
4. ~6 weeks before: D'var meeting, Torah, Haftarah check with officiating Rabbi (student only)
5. ~6 weeks before: Family Preparation meeting with officiating Rabbi (take place after above meeting) (parents only)
6. ~3 weeks before: Rehearsal 1 with Cantor (student only)
7. ~1.5 weeks before: Rehearsal 2 with Cantor (student only)
8. Thursday before: Final Rehearsal with Rabbi (family required)

## **The Day has Arrived!**

### **The Family Rehearsal, Thursday Afternoon**

There will be a family rehearsal at 3:30 or 4:30PM on the Thursday afternoon prior to your child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah in the Sanctuary. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah and parents/caregivers are expected to attend. Siblings are welcome to come to the rehearsal but their attendance is not necessary. The rehearsal will take between one hour and an hour and a half.

During the rehearsal, we will rehearse all of the components of the Shabbat morning service as well as the relevant portions of the Friday evening service.

The rabbi will ask you for the names of family members and friends who will participate in the Saturday morning service. Please be sure to assign all of the parts in advance of the family rehearsal.

### **The Friday Evening Service**

We ask that you arrive at the service 15 minutes prior to the start of the service.

#### **Friday Evening Shabbat worship begins at 6:30PM.**

The parents and/or caregivers of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah are invited to participate in the candle lighting blessing. You will receive the specific page for the candle blessing during the Thursday evening rehearsal. The parents/caregivers of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah are invited to open the ark for our concluding prayers.

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah will lead the congregation in the Kiddush & Motzi (Blessing over the Wine and Challah).

B'nai Mitzvah families sponsor the Oneg Shabbat (celebratory dessert) that follows the Friday evening service. A portion of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah fee goes toward this sponsorship, which helps to defray the cost of flowers, fruit, and other items, which are part of our usual oneg experience. The oneg is further subsidized by the Temple sisterhood. The desserts are provided by members of our oneg committee, and the also set up during the day on Friday. If anyone from your family wants to participate, or if you have a family member who would like to contribute family favorite home-made baked treats (please no nuts) contact the oneg committee through Loretta Zack in the Temple office at [lzack@templeshalom.org](mailto:lzack@templeshalom.org) or 617-332-9550. If your child has special dietary needs, please let us know.

## The Shabbat Morning Service

The Sanctuary will be open at 8:45 AM should you wish to take pictures. Photographs may be taken prior to and after the service. **No photography is permitted during the service.** If you wish to take pictures in the Sanctuary at another time, please contact our Executive Director.

You may open the Ark during the taking of pictures. However, no Torah scrolls may be removed from the Ark unless one of the rabbis or cantor is present. A rabbi or cantor should be able to join you at approximately 9:30 AM to help facilitate the handling of a Torah scroll, if you request this in advance.

The Temple has a recording system in the Sanctuary to provide a video recording of the service to each Bar/Bat Mitzvah family. No other photography or recording is permitted during the service. The Temple has a call-in phone number that will give the live audio of the service for anyone who is not able to attend in person. Contact the Temple office for the call-in phone number. If the Shabbat morning service is taking place in our Rothman Chapel, we do not record the service. You will receive a copy of your service at your Post-Bar/Bat Mitzvah meeting.

**A walk-through rehearsal for all family and friends participating in the service begins promptly at 9:45AM.** All those who have a part in the service must be in the Sanctuary at that time. The ushers will arrive before 10:10 AM so that they can keep your guests in the foyer. The rehearsal will take 15-20 minutes. Your guests will be admitted to the Sanctuary as soon as the rehearsal ends.

**The morning service begins at 10:45AM.** The Bar/Bat Mitzvah customarily sits on the bimah (raised platform at the front of the sanctuary).

## Family Participation in the Service

It is our custom to invite members of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family to participate in portions of the service. These include (A) opening the ark; (B) undressing and dressing the Torah; (C) having an *Aliyah*—reciting the blessings before and after a section of the Torah is read; (D) reading the English translation of the Torah portion; and (E) leading Kiddush or Motzi (blessings over the wine and challah) at the end of the service.

**Opening the Ark:** You may designate one person to open and close the Ark at the beginning of the Torah Service.

**Family A: Undressing the Torah:** You may choose one person to help undress the Torah.

**Family B: Dressing the Torah:** You may choose one person to help dress the Torah.

**Having an *Aliyah*:** Each family will receive two *aliyot* (in addition to parent and Bar/Bat Mitzvah *aliyot*) opportunities to recite the blessings before and after the reading of the Torah. (These are designed to honor grandparents, but may be given to any Jewish relative.) We ask that within

each Aliyah, at least one person is Jewish. Please speak with clergy about specifics with your family. We want to make sure everyone feels included and has the support they need!

PLEASE NOTE: These blessings are in Hebrew. Please plan accordingly, assigning these honors to people who feel comfortable reciting or chanting the blessings in Hebrew. The Torah blessings can be found in the appendix to this handout, and the rabbi or cantor can provide an audio recording upon request.

**English Translation of the Torah Reading:** You may choose one or two participants to read the English translation of the Torah portion. You will find a translation of the Torah portion in your child's Bar/Bat Mitzvah packet. This translation corresponds to the translation available to worshippers in the sanctuary. Be sure to assign the readers prior to the Thursday rehearsal, and please provide the participants with copies of what they are to read.

**Family A: Kiddush (Blessing over the Wine):** You may designate one or two members of your family to lead the Kiddush at the conclusion of the service.

**Family B: Ha-Motzi (Blessing over the Challah):** You may designate one or two members of your family to lead Ha-motzi at the conclusion of the service.

**For a double B'nai Mitzvah, Family B is responsible to provide the challah. For a single, the family must also provide the challah. Please bring it with you on Saturday morning.**

### Parental Participation in the Service

The Bar/Bat Mitzvah customarily sits on the *bimah* (raised platform at the front of the sanctuary). Parents will ascend the *bimah* following the *hakafah* (Torah procession).

For the third *Aliyah* (the third section of the Torah that is read), both parents will come forward to stand with the Bar/Bat Mitzvah at the reader's desk. One parent will recite the blessings before and after the reading of the Torah. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah is called to the Torah by his/her Hebrew name for the fourth *Aliyah*. Following the concluding section of the Torah, the other parent will offer one of the two parental blessings prepared by the Religious Practices Committee. You will be able to discuss these alternatives during your Family Preparation meeting approximately six weeks before the ceremony.

Parents accompany the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to the Ark for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah's Personal Prayer and the rabbinic blessing.

Following the Rabbi's blessing, parents will have a chance to speak to their child at the reader's desk.

## The Parents' Talk

Parents will have an opportunity to speak to their child during the service. It is important to keep in mind the following guidelines:

- Your child has just finished leading the congregation in prayer and has become an adult in the Jewish community. Your remarks should reflect the life-cycle transition we are celebrating, the spiritual and ethical messages that you take from the bar/bat mitzvah experience, as well as his/her commitment to Judaism and Jewish responsibility.
- Use this as an opportunity to speak directly and personally to your child. **What are the values and lessons gleaned from becoming bar/bat mitzvah that you want to communicate to your child?**
- Please be aware that in times such as this, less is more. The most meaningful Parents' Talks are concise and direct. **Each family should plan on speaking no more than two minutes.**
- This is a personal and sacred moment. Prepare your thoughts in advance, make some notes or a text, and speak from your heart.

## Ushering

As many of our guests are newcomers to Temple Shalom, it is important that we provide ushers to help with seating, distribution of programs and/or prayer books, and to assist with directions. We also believe it is helpful for parents to attend a service in close proximity to the date of their own child's ceremony. Please notify Loretta Zack, assistant to the clergy, of any substitutions.

You have received the ushering information via sign-up genius already. Please let our B'nai Mitzvah coordinator know if you have any questions about this.

## Kippah and Tallit (Head coverings and prayer shawls)

The wearing of *kippot* and *tallit* at Temple Shalom is the personal choice of each worshipper. The congregation makes *kippot* (*head coverings*) available to those who want them. They are in a basket in the entranceway to the Sanctuary.

Traditionally, the *tallit* (prayer shawl) was worn by Jewish adults at all morning services. The *shaliach tzibbur*, the prayer leader, also wore a tallit when conducting the service. Reform Judaism affirms the right of men and women to choose to make that *tallit* a part of their religious lives. Accordingly, the Bar/Bat Mitzvah is invited to wear a *tallit* if he or she finds the custom to be a meaningful one.

## A Service Booklet

The Temple does not provide a service booklet for the morning of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. While there is no requirement to do so, some families choose to prepare a booklet listing family participants, page numbers, information on the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service, the architecture of the sanctuary, etc. **Families sharing the Shabbat morning service should collaborate on the booklet.** Sample copies from past services are available for photocopy from the Temple office. One of the rabbis or cantor will assist you with the page numbers, and are available to proofread your program before you print it.

### **Outline for a standard Shabbat morning service:**

Opening Prayers		p. 287-312
Shabbat Morning Liturgy		p. 313-337
	Student A & Student B	p. 362-375
Torah Service		
Opening the Ark	(Family A) (Family B)	
Undressing the Torah	(Family A)	
Torah verses A	(Family A, Family A)	Pp. in Plaut
	(Family A, Family A)	
	Parents A	
	Student A	
Torah verses B	(Family B, Family B)	Pp. in Plaut
	(Family B, Family B)	
	Parents B	
	Student B	
Dressing the Torah	(Family B)	
Torah Translation	(Family A, Family A, Family B, Family B)	
Haftarah verses A	Student A	Pp. in Plaut
Haftarah verses B	Student B	Pp. in Plaut
Presentations		
Personal Prayers	Student B	
	Student A	

Parents Remarks

Parents B

Parents A

Aleinu

p. 586

Mourner's Kaddish

p. 598

Closing Song: Ein Keilohenu

p. 626

Kiddush

(Family A, Family A)

HaMotzi

(Family B, Family B)

**Mazel Tov! Please be in touch if you have any questions or concerns along the way!**

### Blessings for the Reading of Torah

Recited upon being called for an *Aliyah*.

### Blessing Before the Reading of the Torah

**BAR'CHU** et Adonai ham'vorach.

Baruch Adonai ham'vorach l'olam va-ed.

Baruch atah, Adonai

Eloheinu, Melech haolam,

asher bachar banu mikol haamim,

v'natan lanu et Torato.

Baruch atah, Adonai, notein haTorah.

בְּרַכּוּ אֶת יְיָ הַמְבַרְךְ.  
בְּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְבַרְךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ  
אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,  
אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים,  
וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

**BLESS ADONAI** who is blessed.

Blessed is Adonai who is blessed now and forever.

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has chosen us from among the peoples, and given us the Torah. Blessed are You, Adonai, who gives the Torah.

### Blessing After the Reading of the Torah

**BARUCH** atah, Adonai

Eloheinu, Melech haolam,

asher natan lanu Torat emet,

v'chayei olam nata b'tocheinu.

Baruch atah, Adonai, notein haTorah.

בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ  
אֱלֹהֵינוּ, מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,  
אֲשֶׁר נָתַן לָנוּ תּוֹרַת אֱמֶת,  
וְחַיֵּי עוֹלָם נָטַע בְּתוֹכֵנוּ.  
בְּרוּךְ אַתָּה, יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה.

**BLESSED ARE YOU**, Adonai our God, Sovereign of the universe, who has given us a Torah of truth, implanting within us eternal life.

Blessed are You, Adonai, who gives the Torah.



## Temple Shalom *of Newton*

### Ushering Instructions

Thank you for ushering at our Shabbat *Shacharit*, morning worship services. We come together for this service in celebration of Shabbat. In this service, we also welcome children into our community as *b'nai mitzvah*, fully participant members of the congregation. After a long period of intensive study, our students lead us in worship, read from Torah, teach the congregation, and express their understanding of what it means to have become *bar/bat mitzvah*.

**Please pay close note to the following points to help us in our worship experience:**

- ⤴ We ask that you usher the Shabbat morning service that precedes your own child's service.
- ⤴ **Please arrive by 10:10 AM.** One of the rabbis or cantor will greet you and be available to answer any questions you may have.
- ⤴ The primary function of the ushers is to greet people as they arrive for the service.
- ⤴ Families may have a booklet they ask you to distribute as people arrive.
- ⤴ We make *kippot* available for anyone who would like them. The wearing of *kippot* at Temple Shalom is a personal choice for each worshiper, men and women. If the *b'nai mitzvah* families have not ordered their own *kippot*, special for the day, we have some available.
- ⤴ We gather as one, single community for our Shabbat morning worship. Often, guests will ask which side is designated for each of the *bar/bat mitzvah* students. Please make no such designations, inviting guests to sit anywhere within the congregation.
- ⤴ Guests often arrive early to the Shabbat morning service. We ask that if a rehearsal is taking place in the sanctuary, you keep the doors closed, and ask them to wait in the hallway until the rehearsal has been completed.
- ⤴ We ask that one usher stay by the entrance to welcome people who arrive after we have begun the service.
- ⤴ During the service, the ushers should also watch after the groups of younger guests, friends of the *bar/bat mitzvah*. We ask that if necessary you quiet them down.
- ⤴ **Please know that we do not allow cellphones or cameras to be used in the sanctuary during the service. If you see anyone using their devices, please instruct them to refrain.**

Again, thank you for your help in our services. By ushering you help Temple Shalom to live out our value of *kehilah kedoshah*, being a sacred and spiritual space, dedicated to making sure people feel welcome and comfortable when they come to worship with us.

*For further questions or information, please contact the Temple office at (617) 332-9550.*