

Guidelines for Reading from the Torah

To assist the individuals you have chosen for this honor, please distribute these guidelines to them. All participants are also welcome to attend any of the child's weekly bimah sessions with the Cantor, or to contact the Cantor for a session to rehearse their Torah readings.

Overview

Mazel Tov on your upcoming *simcha*, and on your desire to enhance the celebration of this milestone by preparing a Torah reading!

Reading from the Torah is considered very sacred. There are special requirements for doing so, to which all readers must adhere in order to preserve the holiness of the Torah and the occasion. It also requires considerable preparation time to prepare a reading.

All readers are required to read directly from the Torah scroll on the Bar/Bat Mitzvah date, and are not allowed to read from any other source (e.g. paper copies, etc.). The words inscribed on the Torah are in a special font and have no vowels. Besides pronouncing the words correctly, they must be chanted with a special melody, called *trope*.

For those who want to read from the Torah, we have numerous resources to assist you, and will provide .mp3 files of the readings, and a *tikkun* copy of the reading. The *tikkun* shows the reading with regular font, vowels and musical trope symbols, alongside the corresponding Torah font which has no vowels or trope symbols. We will even provide you with a photograph from our digital library of your reading from the actual Torah that will be used on the day of the service.

During the weeks before the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, we urge all readers to “rehearse” with the Cantor in order to make sure that they are well prepared for their reading. Since many parents, siblings, and grandparents are local to our area, we can help as much as possible during this preparation time. For those “out of the area” Torah readers, we do require some previous experience reading Torah, since we cannot help them along the process.

Please understand that we are not discouraging you from undertaking this task. On the contrary, this is an exceptionally meaningful addition to your *simcha*, and your commitment sets a great example for the child becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Reading from the Torah is not a difficult thing to do, but it does require a commitment of time to prepare adequately, and we want to assist you as much as possible.