

PART ONE– PRELIMINARY MATTERS

Bar/Bat Mitzvah is a beautiful and important Jewish ceremony which requires considerable preparation and planning. The events surrounding it can generate excitement, satisfaction, and some amount of anxiety. This can be true for both the family and the child, who is, after all, the center of this event. We have written this booklet to help answer many of the questions about how Bar/Bat Mitzvah works at K.I. It is our wish that you will remember the Bar/Bat Mitzvah as a positive experience which brought Judaism and your lives closer together.

The Meaning of Bar/Bat Mitzvah

A Bar/Bat Mitzvah commemorates the time when children begin to take responsibility for making the decisions, choices, and commitments that characterize adult Jewish life. It is also a process that encourages them, and their families, to consider, perhaps for the first time, the meaning of Judaism and the place of God in their lives.

At one time becoming a Jewish adult occurred automatically at age 13. Indeed, in the Middle Ages when Bar Mitzvah ceremonies began, 13 year olds could marry and, by entering into an apprenticeship with a master craftsman, begin their life's work.

Nowadays, becoming a Bar/Bat Mitzvah means becoming a Jew committed to observing mitzvot and taking responsibility for one's actions. It takes guidance from parents and many years of learning and study to accomplish this. But it is a goal within the reach of our children and one worth striving for.

Eligibility

Keneseth Israel has established several criteria which a child **must** meet to be eligible for Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

- 1) Current enrollment in Religious School and regular attendance for the three years prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah. (Students are required to attend 85% of Hebrew and Religious School classes.)
- 2) Attendance at a minimum of six Shabbat services, two of which must be Friday night services and two Saturday morning services. Children must check in with the rabbi before the service. Disruptive behavior may result in loss of credit for that service.

Scheduling

Each fall as children enter the fifth (5) grade Bar/Bat Mitzvah dates are set. The process begins with a letter from the Temple asking parents to choose several dates as close as possible to the child's 13th birthday. We then match choices to available dates and work out conflicts over the phone. The temple reserves the right to assign dates. This process is coordinated with the Temple's Administrator.

Assignment of Torah and Haftarah Portions

Jewish tradition divides the Torah into fixed weekly segments so that it can be read in its entirety each year. The cycle begins in the fall, on the Sabbath following *Simchat Torah*. In the vast majority of cases, a student's Torah portion comes from the traditional weekly passage and if on a holiday, the special reading for that occasion.

Each week it is also customary to read the Haftarah, a selection from the Writings or Prophets, the other two sections of the Bible. Jewish tradition assigns particular Haftarah readings to each weekly Torah portion.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Preparation Schedule

Length of time prior to Bar/Bat Mitzvah

8 years—At K.I., Hebrew education begins in Kindergarten and continues through the early elementary grades in an age appropriate way.

5 years—Hebrew begins in the very early grades and is integrated into the curriculum. If a child is falling behind, based on yearly assessments, a tutor may be assigned.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah dates are set in the fall when children enter 5th grade.

1 year-1 week—Parents and child must usher at two Friday night services, attend two Saturday morning services, and attend at least two additional services. Sign-in sheets will be available for the child at each service.

6 months—Begin tutorial sessions with your assigned tutor. Torah portions, an MP3 with the trope and meetings with the tutor and Rabbi are set up.

2 months and 3 months—Entire family meets with the Rabbi to write the *drash* (the child's speech), and discuss the meaning of the event.

Week of Bar/Bat Mitzvah—Family has its final meeting with the rabbi, and the tutor and conducts the dress rehearsal with the family in the Sanctuary.

It is the responsibility of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family to initiate meetings with the Temple staff.

Special Orientation Session in 6th Grade

The Clergy and Religious School Director will lead an orientation session for parents of children in grade six. The learning session will focus on the purpose and meaning of Bar/Bat Mitzvah, aspects of the service, and other subjects of importance of Bar/Bat Mitzvah preparation.

Families are required to attend a minimum of two B'nai Mitzvah services during the year prior to the your date to become familiar with the service.

All B'nai Mitzvah students must complete a Mitzvah project, must be invited to attend and participate in each other's Bar or Bat Mitzvah service and must be invited to any reception taking place at KI if it directly follows the morning service.

PART TWO-ABOUT THE BAR/BAT SERVICE

Erev Shabbat: At services on Friday night, the family is honored by leading the Candle Blessing and Kiddush. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student leads the congregation in the V'Hafta.

Shabbat Morning: The Bar/Bat Mitzvah leads most of the Sabbath worship service. At the beginning of the Torah service on Saturday morning, the Rabbi takes the Torah out of the ark and passes it from grandparents to the parents, who then pass it to their child. Each family may have up to four *aliyot* at the Torah service. At the discretion of the Rabbi, under special circumstances additional *aliyot* may be added. The Torah is chanted by the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Customarily, the parents are assigned the third *aliyah* and the Bar/Bat Mitzvah the fourth. Then the Bar/Bat Mitzvah, standing at the reading desk, chants the Haftorah portion. After the Haftorah, the Torah is returned to the Ark. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student delivers the *drash*, a short sermonette. If they wish, the parents of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah may make a personal statement when their child finishes the speech. Parents should keep their remarks to no more than 5 minutes. In addition, a member of the Board of Trustees presents greetings and gifts to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah on behalf of the congregation. The Rabbi speaks to the child and the Clergy then bless the child with the Priestly Benediction in front of the Ark.

Bar/Bat Mitzvahs are held at Shabbat morning services from September through June. It may be possible to arrange a Friday evening Bar/Bat Mitzvah. As always the congregation will respond to special circumstances of any family. Please note that entertainment and alcohol are not permitted at a Friday evening Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Saturday morning Bar/Bat Mitzvah service begins at 10:30 a.m. Friday evening service begins at 7:30 p.m. Services begin promptly, and we urge families to tell their guests to arrive at least 15 minutes prior to the start of services. Bar/Bat Mitzvah services last approximately two hours.

Other Participants in the Service

In addition to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and his/her parents, other people may participate in the services. A sibling may read one of the opening prayers on Saturday morning. Usually grandparents are asked to be part of the Torah passing ceremony from generation to generation. Other relatives often have the honor to dress and undress the Torah and open/close the Ark.

When considering the possibility of such participants, families should remember that the child, not the extended family, should be the center of the congregation's attention.

Music

The family is free to discuss the music for the service with the Cantor.

Families with Non-Jewish Relatives

Many of our families are interfaith families who may have extended family members who are not Jewish. Our goal is to provide opportunities for these extended family members to participate while maintaining the integrity of Jewish worship. Please speak with the rabbi or cantor about your family's specific needs.

Candle Blessing and Kiddush: These prayers, which welcome the start of Shabbat on Friday evening, are read by a Jewish member of the family. An alternative prayer (see page 8) can be read by a non-Jewish parent.

Passing the Torah:

L'dor Va'dor—From Generation to Generation: Parents and members of the family are invited onto the Bimah to pass the Torah from person to person symbolizing the carrying forward the traditions of Judaism from generation to generation. While all of the child's grandparents are welcome to stand on the Bimah, it is appropriate to pass the Torah itself to the Jewish grandparents. However, if the non-Jewish parent and grandparents have participated in and supported the Jewish upbringing of the child, the Torah is passed from all grandparents to both parents to the child.

Hakafa: It is customary at Keneseth Israel for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah to carry the Torah through the sanctuary with the entire family joining in the procession.

Torah Blessings: These are said, or chanted, by Jewish family members who are often accompanied to the bimah by their non-Jewish spouses. As in the Torah transmission ceremony, a non-Jewish parent is welcome to participate in the *aliyah*. In these cases, the Jewish parent chants the Torah Blessings and the non-Jewish parent may recite an alternative prayer (see page 8).

Dressing, Undressing and Lifting the Torah: This honor is reserved for Jewish relatives or friends.

Opening and Closing Ark Doors: This honor may be given to any family member or friend 13 years or older.

Kippah and Tallit

In Reform Judaism, worshipers may choose whether to wear a *kippah* (*yarmulke*) and/or *tallit* (prayer shawl). Families may make available special *kippot* for those attending the service. If the family so chooses, a special person in the life of the child can present the Bar/Bat Mitzvah *tallit*.

Ushers

Services are congregational events and we feel that it is important to welcome guests properly. The family of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah may select four ushers. Please give your ushers a copy of the procedures in advance of the service. (One copy appears on page 9 of this booklet and additional copies are available upon request). We recognize the desire on the part of Bar/Bat Mitzvah parents to honor guests and family members by asking them to serve as ushers, but we require for safety purposes that at least one usher be familiar with the KI grounds, safety procedures and equipment.

Photography

It is the congregation's policy to permit still photography in the sanctuary before the start of services. **All picture taking in the sanctuary must be over by 10:00 a.m.** Once the service begins, photography without flash is permitted from behind the folding wall only, provided that there is no noise. Photography during the service by people in the sanctuary is not permitted.

Video Taping

A video camera may be set up behind the folding wall in the Social Hall. No artificial lights are permitted. Taking video during the service by people in the sanctuary is not permitted.

Flowers

The family usually provides the Bimah bouquets for Friday night and for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service. The flowers are to be delivered before **12:00 noon on Friday** and may not be taller than the height of the lectern. Alternatively, upon request, the Women of KI will provide the usual flower arrangement.

Oneg Shabbat

It is customary that Bar/Bat Mitzvah families contribute to the Oneg Shabbat after services on Friday. The Temple Administrator will contact you about sponsoring or co-sponsoring the Oneg Shabbat.

Candy

The throwing of candy during Bar/Bat Mitzvah services is not permitted.

PART THREE—SOCIAL FUNCTIONS

Most families entertain their friends and family at a private luncheon, reception, or dinner on Saturday. The Temple is a beautiful and appropriate setting for these functions. Complete rules for use of the building, including a fee schedule for private parties, and an application to reserve a room, are available in the office.

Please contact the administrator no later than three months prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and advise the following:

- A. Number of people expected
- B. Type and location of social function
- C. Whether or not the affair will be catered
- D. Plan for use of rooms/spaces

Obviously, a degree of planning and scheduling is needed to accommodate any user of the Temple facilities. The sooner the administrator is advised, the more efficiently the maintenance staff can perform their preparation work to assure a well-run affair.

Alcoholic Beverages

Alcoholic beverages are permitted only on Saturday. It is the responsibility of the host to see that an attitude of moderation is observed. **Under no circumstance are any individuals under the age of 21 to be served any alcoholic beverages.**

Dietary Rules

Shellfish, pork and pork products are not permitted at the Temple.

Responsibility and Liability

The family shall be held responsible and be billed for any loss, breakage or damage to Temple equipment and property.

Services of the Maintenance Staff

No function may be held without an authorized representative of the Temple present. The maintenance staff member is present to assure that the Temple facilities are open and available to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah family, to maintain control over whatever special utensils or equipment are needed by the caterer, and to secure the facilities after the ceremony is completed. The maintenance staff will also set up the tables and chairs in the respective rooms and will be available during the entire period of the affair to assist as needed.

Decorations

All decorations have to be approved by the administrator. The Temple does not permit pasting on walls or furniture, or the use of stickers, nails, screws, etc. which will deface or mar the building.

Entertainment

It is permissible to provide entertainment for a Saturday Bar/Bat Mitzvah, but not at a Friday Bar/Bat Mitzvah. It is the responsibility of the host family to see that such entertainment is appropriate for the occasion and have it approved by the administrator. Temple policy forbids the use of fog or smoke. **Gambling party themes are never allowed.**

Dress Code

Please remember that our sanctuary is God's place, and we should act and dress in a conservative and respectful manner. If you have any questions about what constitutes appropriate dress for you or your guests in the sanctuary, please consult the rabbi or temple administrator.

Rules Applying to Caterers

The administrator must approve a caterer before it will be permitted to use the Temple facilities. A list of approved caterers is available. The caterer can be Kosher or non-Kosher.

The caterer who serves a particular affair is responsible for damages to the Temple property. Furthermore, the caterer is required to leave the Temple facilities in the same condition in which it found them.

Each caterer must submit certificates of insurance for Workmen's Compensation and Public Liability to the Temple office two weeks prior to using Temple facilities.

The caterer will be expected to wash and dry all dishware and utensils used and provide an individual to operate the dishwashing equipment. A maintenance staff member will provide operating instructions on the use of all kitchen equipment. The caterer may not use any silver, paper supplies, or candles belonging to Keneseth Israel unless prior arrangements have been made.

The staff member is responsible for removing and replacing back in storage all dishware, utensils and other Temple property used.

The member hiring the caterer will be responsible for the caterer's compliance with these rules. Any caterer not complying with these rules will be removed from the approved list. Whether the family uses a caterer or prepares food themselves using the kitchen facilities, the family is ultimately responsible for any loss or damage that may occur.

Coat Room

The Temple assumes no responsibility for wearing apparel brought into the building or for any garment checked. Members may arrange for checkroom service with the Administrator. The cost of this service is \$100.00.

PART FOUR— MISCELLANEOUS AND FEES

The Temple Bulletin

Each Bar/Bat Mitzvah is listed in the monthly worship schedule. The family is requested to supply a photograph of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah and the information on the form on page 10.

Tzedakah

In Jewish tradition it is customary to celebrate happy occasions by giving Tzedakah. The congregation is always grateful for contributions made in honor of a Bar/Bat Mitzvah, and the Temple Administrator can assist families in choosing an appropriate fund. To honor your child's achievement in perpetuity, families can purchase a leaf on the Aytz Chaim tree in our multipurpose room.

As a member there is no charge for the services of the clergy at life cycle events, but a contribution to their discretionary funds is customary.

MAZON

Keneseth Israel is a charter member of MAZON, a national Jewish organization which distributes money to combat hunger and poverty. We encourage our members to participate in MAZON by contributing 3% of the cost of their parties. More details are available from the office or the clergy.

No Smoking

This is a no smoking facility.

Fees

You must be a member in good standing to secure your Bar/Bat Mitzvah date and remain in good standing to keep the date. To be member in good standing all Temple dues, religious school fees, and capital improvement fund pledges must be paid up-to-date. If these criteria are not met, your Bar/Bat Mitzvah date can be given to another family.

Only members in good standing may use the facilities of our congregation. The schedule of costs for a Bar/Bat Mitzvah will be as follows:

\$ 1350.00	Basic charge to each Bar/Bat Mitzvah family
\$ 18.00	Cost replacement for CD, binder, Torah portion booklet
\$ 100.00	Coat Room Attendant
\$ 379.00	Use of Multi-Purpose Room
\$ 499.00	Use of Social Hall
\$ 829.00	Use of both rooms

The above fees are subject to change. One third of the basic charge (\$450.00) is due two years before the date of the ceremony, one third one year before and the final third three months before. These funds will be returned if your simcha does not take place. If you wish to use the temple for your reception, those fees must be paid in full three months before your date. Financial arrangements are available if needed through the administrator.

Person to Contact

For any assistance in planning your celebration, call the Temple Administrator, at 610-435-9075

***The Congregation wishes you and your entire family great joy and joins in extending a hearty
Mazel Tov!***

PART FIVE—ALTERNATIVE PRAYERS FOR A NON-JEWISH FAMILY MEMBER

Please note that these are just examples of appropriate prayers. If you feel these are not suitable, please contact the rabbi or cantor for alternatives.

CANDLE BLESSING AND KIDDUSH:

For the non-Jewish mother (after the candles are lit and the blessing sung):

As we have offered a blessing over these candles of Shabbat, we create light and shadow. May we raise our children in light and bequeath to future generations the brightness of hope and the shadow of peace.

For the non-Jewish father (before the Kiddush):

We give thanks, O God, for our family as we rejoice with our son/daughter on this momentous day. May our family circle be warm with love and companionship. In it, may we always find rest from our day's work, and refuge from its cares. May our joys be deepened and our griefs softened by the love we give and receive.

For either non-Jewish parent after either the candle blessing or before the Kiddush:

On the eve of our child's entrance into Jewish maturity as a Bar/Bat Mitzvah:
May he/she always cherish this precious inheritance that comes into his/her hands,
May his/her heart always be filled with joy,
His/her mind with wisdom and insight, his/her lips with kindness,
And may he/she be a worthy sustainer of the teachings of the Torah
That have given light, meaning, and inspiration to all humanity.

TORAH BLESSING:

For the non-Jewish parent (after the traditional aliyah):

We lift our voices in gratitude that our son/daughter today takes his/her place among the people of Israel. We pray that he/she will do so with pride and joy. As God called Israel to be a light to the nations, so, too, we pray that our son/daughter will be his/her own ray of light to the world.

PART SIX—FORMS

Instructions for Ushers

1. Ushers should arrive about 30 minutes prior to the service.
2. Ushers are the “face” of the congregation at services and should welcome all worshippers warmly.
3. As worshippers enter the sanctuary, ushers should give them a Shabbat supplement and provide a *kippah* and/or *tallit* to those who request them. At Keneseth Israel, the wearing of *kippah* and *tallit* is optional at all services.
4. When Services are about to begin, ushers should close both Sanctuary doors. Ushers should open both doors at the end of services.
5. Ushers should remain at the sanctuary door throughout the service.
 - A. Admit latecomers when the congregation is seated, not standing. If necessary, escort latecomers to seats, offer them a prayer book, and tell them the appropriate page number.
 - B. Ask people waiting in the lobby to keep their voices low enough so as not to disturb those inside.
 - C. Assist those leaving or entering during the service. Worshippers are requested to remain in the sanctuary during the standing prayers, Torah service, sermon, and musical portions. Please do not re-admit worshippers during these parts of the service.
6. Temperature adjustments or changes of volume on the amplifying system should be made by the maintenance staff at your request. **Do not alter settings yourself.**
7. Telephone locations are in the kitchen and library. For privacy, the library is the best available location.
8. If members of the congregation are excessively noisy ushers are requested to quiet them. Small children are to be supervised during services by a family member. Please do not permit children at B'nai Mitzvah to walk in and out the sanctuary. Before the start of services, ushers should tell the children that they are expected remain in the sanctuary throughout the service.
9. Children are warmly welcomed here at KI. We ask parents to use their discretion and understanding to escort their children to the foyer when doing so will respect the ability of others to pray, and not distract the Bar/Bat Mitzvah child.
10. Photography is not permitted in the sanctuary and ushers should ask anyone taking photographs to stop.
11. In case of emergency, e.g. if someone should become ill or faint, ushers are expected to render assistance. If something should happen to the facilities, e.g. as the failure in the PA system, an usher should immediately seek out someone from the maintenance staff. A first aid kit is in the kitchen. The oxygen tank and defibrillator are in the wooden cabinet in the hallway across from the handicap bathroom. There is a sofa in the ladies room.
12. Please remind guests all cell phones and pagers must be turned off or set to vibrate.

COPY OF AGREEMENT FOR USE OF FACILITIES

Name _____

Date & time of the affair _____

Number of people expected _____

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>
Which room will you be using:		
Sanctuary (165 seats)	_____	_____
Social Hall (48'6"x 75'x 58'8)	_____	_____
Multi-Purpose Room (35'4" x 58'8")	_____	_____
Will you be having a Kiddush?	_____	_____
Will you be using the kitchen?	_____	_____
Is your affair being catered at KI?	_____	_____

Caterer's name _____

Two weeks prior to your affair we need to have a \$500 deposit and a Certificate of Insurance from the caterer.

Videographer
Name _____

Florist
Name _____

Photographer
Name _____

Our Temple owns 18 round tables 60" diameter
 15 round tables 72" diameter
 8 round tables 48" diameter
 18 rectangular tables 8"

If you need additional tables, you are responsible for the rental fees.

Fees for the use of the facilities \$379 Multi-Purpose Room
 \$499 Social Hall
 \$829 Both Rooms
 \$150 for both an afternoon and evening use

Use of the MPR and/or Social Hall for an afternoon affair may run **from noon to 4:30 p.m.**
Use for an evening affair may run from 7:00 p.m. to 11:30 p.m. You will be billed an **additional \$150** for anything over the specified time.

All fees must be paid two weeks prior to the Bar/Bat Mitzvah.

Congregants' Name