

# B'nei Mitzvah Handbook



Torah Covers Magen David Aloft #1 and #2, Nina Bonos ©2014, [www.ninabonos.com](http://www.ninabonos.com)

## Congregation Beth Shalom of Napa Valley

1455 Elm Street, Napa, CA 94559

707-253-7305

[www.cbsnapa.org](http://www.cbsnapa.org)

Dear Congregation Beth Shalom B'nei Mitzvah Families,

You, your child, and your entire family are about to embark on a wonderful journey culminating in your teenager becoming a B'nei Mitzvah in the presence of your loved ones and our CBS community. Our goal is to make the entire process as meaningful as possible for your child and for your family. Each child and each family are unique. This handbook provides an overview of our B'nei Mitzvah program.

This handbook is intended to guide you through the process. In this handbook you will find answers to many of the questions you may have, from study requirements for a B'nei Mitzvah, to ways in which you can include friends and loved ones in the service. While at times preparation may seem daunting, we are here to provide support at every point along the way.

As each child prepares for his or her special day, it is up to the families, parents, siblings, and beyond, to provide support during the time leading up to the ceremony. Words of encouragement throughout the process will definitely help your child. Along the way, each child will have a chance to learn more and discover about what it means to be Jewish, and to live a Jewish life; explore Jewish ethical and ritual practices, learn to chant the Torah and Haftarah, and learn to lead parts of the Saturday morning Shabbat service.

Preparing for a B'nei Mitzvah involves exploring and understanding one's Jewish identity; learning about Jewish practices, history, and ethics as well as learning the Torah and Haftarah portions. We also want to create an experience where each B'nei Mitzvah understands the meaning of what is being read and of the service. The B'nei Mitzvah should not be viewed as the culmination of, or "graduation" from, Jewish living and learning. B'nei Mitzvah students are encouraged to continue their affiliation with Congregation Beth Shalom through involvement in our youth programs and other special programs at CBS.

We look forward to working with each and every student and family as you move forward with this process. B'Shalom,



Rabbi Niles Goldstein

פִּרְקֵי אֲבוֹת ה:כא  
בֶּן שְׁלֹש עָשָׂר לְמִצְוֹת

Pirkei Avot 5:21

At thirteen one takes on the responsibility for mitzvot.

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# PREREQUISITES

## BASIC REQUIREMENTS

1. The student must be at least thirteen (13) years of age at the time of the ceremony.
2. The student is required to be currently enrolled in and be regularly attending Congregation Beth Shalom's Religious School and have successfully completed the 6th grade. The student is expected to remain in religious school throughout the 7th grade year.
3. The student's family must be a member in good standing of Congregation Beth Shalom. A member in good standing means that the household has made financial arrangements with the synagogue office and/or President and will have payment of membership completed in full or on a payment plan to be completed by the date of the B'nei Mitzvah.

Please note: The requirements and expectations for children with special needs will be decided on an individual basis through consultation between the family and the Rabbi and Educator.

## EDUCATIONAL EXPECTATIONS

1. Successful completion of a minimum of three (3) years of the Congregation Beth Shalom Religious School (including Sunday morning and mid-week attendance.) Students transferring from other congregations/religious schools will be evaluated by the Education Director for placement. Students are expected to attend at least 80% of Sunday morning sessions and Hebrew sessions, excluding excused absences. The synagogue will track absences, including excused absences, and will notify families if their child's attendance rate falls below 80%.
2. Knowledge of basic prayers in the service and competency in reading the prayers is expected. In Appendix 1, you will find a list of prayers that the student will be expected to know for the ceremony.

## SERVICE ATTENDANCE REQUIREMENTS

1. B'nei Mitzvah students are required to attend 6 or more Services over the course of the year each year, starting Sept. 1 of the 5th grade year. This includes attendance at B'nei Mitzvah Services, and we strongly recommend attending at least one. Please contact the synagogue for a list of upcoming B'nei Mitzvah.
2. At 2 of these 6 services, the B'nei Mitzvah student must help lead part of the service, such as coming up to the Bimah to lead one prayer. We will hold 3 Friday night Shabbat family services each year where students in grades 4-7 will lead a prayer as a class. If the student

cannot attend these family services, the student may arrange with the Rabbi to help lead one prayer at a different Friday night Shabbat service.

When students attend Shabbat services, they must sign in at the binder by the Bimah. The Education Director will check this binder monthly to track student attendance and will remind families about this requirement as needed.

We strongly encourage parent(s) to attend these services with the student in order to become familiar with the order of the service and the B'nei Mitzvah ceremony of our congregation. Your presence at worship services is an important part of the process of your child becoming a B'nei Mitzvah and bonding with our community.

# LOGISTICS

## RESERVING A DATE

Requests for dates for an upcoming B'nei Mitzvah will be accepted following the B'nei Mitzvah meeting of the student's 5th grade year and **should be made no later than one year before the date**. A date for a B'nei Mitzvah is requested by contacting the Synagogue Director, who will coordinate with the Rabbi and the Music Director before scheduling.

Each family must complete the Special Event Application. If there is an applicable fee assessed, the date will only be confirmed and placed on the calendar once the security deposit and half the rental fee and signed rental agreement have been received. If there is no fee assessment, then a letter of confirmation will be sent to the family by the Special Events Chair.

## THE B'NEI MITZVAH FEE

Each family will be charged a B'nei Mitzvah Fee of \$1,000. This fee includes B'nei Mitzvah expenses incurred by the congregation that are associated with the B'nei Mitzvah process and ceremony, including up to \$500 for meetings with the Education Director, meetings with the Rabbi, materials and standard facility set-up and clean-up.

- \$500 deposit – Date, materials, standard facility set-up and clean-up, initial meetings
- \$300 – service and rehearsal prep with Gordon
- \$200 – security during Saturday service day

The Education Director may recommend that the child meet with a B'nei Mitzvah tutor if the child needs more assistance than can be provided through the CBS Hebrew Program. Tutoring sessions with the B'nei Mitzvah tutor are not included in the fee paid to CBS and will be the responsibility of the individual family. The B'nei Mitzvah study plan needs to be submitted to and approved by the Rabbi and Education Director.

**Any special arrangements for extended luncheons, parties, etc. must be made through the office and will be billed separately.**

Unless special arrangements are made, \$500 (50%) of the B'nei Mitzvah fee is due as a security deposit when the B'nei Mitzvah date is requested. The remaining balance is due no later than 30 days prior to the scheduled date of the B'nei Mitzvah. The B'nei Mitzvah fee is not refundable.

# PREPARING FOR B'NEI MITZVAH

## PREPARATION WITH THE RABBI

Once the date is assigned, and approximately twelve months before the B'nei Mitzvah, students and their parents will meet with the Rabbi to discuss the meaning of the Torah and Haftarah portions, as well as the meaning of B'nei Mitzvah. Students will also select one Ethical Mitzvah Commitment and one Ritual Mitzvah Commitment at this first meeting. Approximately two to three months before the ceremony, students and their parents will meet again with the Rabbi as they prepare their *D'var Torah* ("words of Torah," or a speech about the week's Torah person). Finally, one to two weeks prior to the ceremony, the family will meet with Rabbi Goldstein for a rehearsal at CBS.

## HEBREW PREPARATION

Students will prepare for their role in the service through participation in CBS's Hebrew program. In grades 4-7, students will meet weekly with a CBS teacher or the Education Director to learn the alef bet, to learn to read prayers, and to learn Torah and Haftarah trope. Beginning approximately 9 to 12 months before the child's B'nei Mitzvah, the student will work on the Torah and Haftarah portions for the service with either the Education Director or the Rabbi. If the child needs more assistance than can be provided through CBS's Hebrew program, we may recommend that the child work with a B'nei Mitzvah tutor at the family's expense.

Early in the study process, the student will receive a Mishkan T'filah: Journal Edition, notebook, and MP3 files to assist in study of the Torah and Haftarah. The student needs to bring the Mishkan T'filah and a notebook to each session to take notes and to keep track of assignments throughout the process.

## MITZVAH COMMITMENT

Each child will work with a Mitzvah Mentor on two Mitzvah Commitments: one Ritual Commitment and one Ethical Commitment. The Mitzvah Mentor is a Jewish adult in the community who has volunteered to meet with the child approximately once a month and to help the child plan their ritual and ethical commitments, to provide them with guidance as they continue to work on them, and to check in on their progress. The Mitzvah Mentor will attest that the child has completed their commitments using a form, an example of which is included in Appendix 2. The leader of the Mitzvah Mavens, a group of volunteers who assist with B'nei Mitzvah ceremonies, will provide a list of possible Mitzvah Mentors to each family and will help the child choose their mentor.

**Ritual:** This ceremony is a milestone and distinguishes the B'nei Mitzvah as a member of the Jewish community. It is appropriate at this time for each individual to reflect on how their own daily practices reflect their Jewish identity. A personal ritual commitment will be chosen in consultation with the Rabbi at the initial meeting, approximately one year before the ceremony, and the child will discuss their experience with their Mitzvah Mentor throughout the year.

**Ethical:** While much of the focus in preparation for the B'nei Mitzvah is on the ritual aspects of attaining Jewish adulthood, it is also important that, in becoming a Child of the Commandments, the student relate to the ethical dimensions of Jewish adulthood. The child will choose an ethical commitment in consultation with the Rabbi at the initial meeting, approximately one year before the ceremony, and the child will continue to work on the commitment, with assistance as needed from their Mitzvah Mentor, throughout the year.

Rabbi Goldstein will provide each child with a list of possible ritual and ethical Mitzvot at their first meeting, approximately one year before the date of the child's B'nei Mitzvah.



# THE SERVICE

## SERVICE TIMES

The Friday Evening Service begins at 6:00 p.m., and the Saturday Morning Service begins at 10:30 a.m.

## FACILITY

A deposit of \$500, which is half of the total B'nei Mitzvah fee, will be charged to members for all B'nei Mitzvah families to secure the service date. This deposit fee will cover excess labor fees for cleaning the building after the event, special set-up for either Friday night oneg or Saturday morning kiddish, over and above normal hours. Any additional expense for extra clean-up or repair for damage to the building or kitchen equipment or dishes will be billed to the congregant. If the family chooses to use CBS for their evening event, the normal CBS rental policies and fees will prevail.

All families need to complete all CBS Facility/Event Use Forms at least eight (8) weeks prior to the event. These forms are on-line at [www.cbsnapa.org](http://www.cbsnapa.org) or may be obtained from the CBS office.

All families who plan on serving wine or other alcoholic beverages at their event must contact and meet with the Synagogue Director. All wine or alcoholic beverages served must be provided by the family.

## PARTICIPATION OF THE B'NEI MITZVAH

The B'nei Mitzvah will co-lead the congregation in prayer with the Rabbi and Music Director during the Shabbat service. The service will include the following:

- Reading selected prayers in Hebrew and English as designated by the Rabbi and Education Director.
- Chanting the blessings before and after the Torah and Haftarah readings.
- Chanting/Reciting a part of the weekly Torah portion. This is a selection from one of the Five Books of Moses: Genesis, Exodus, Leviticus, Numbers, and Deuteronomy. The portion is determined by the date of the B'nei Mitzvah.
- Reciting/Chanting a portion of the Haftarah. This is a reading from the prophetic section of the Bible. It is linked to the Torah portion by similarity of thematic content.
- Composing and delivering a *D'var Torah* introducing the Torah and Haftarah portions and explaining the meaning and significance of the Torah portion to themselves.

## PARTICIPATION OF FAMILY AND FRIENDS

Family members and friends may participate in the Saturday morning service in various ways, such as opening and closing the ark, being called up for an Aliyah, and undressing and dressing the Torah. Please think about whom you would like to honor in this way and discuss it with the Rabbi during the rehearsal. We recommend discussing these honors with your chosen friends or family members in advance. Submit the final list of honors (Appendix 4) to the Rabbi via email one week prior to the ceremony. Following are several family and friend participation suggestions for your consideration.

### **Participation of Non-Jewish Family and Friends:**

At a B'nei Mitzvah, every member of the congregation brings their unique contribution to the service. As such, we encourage all members of the congregation that day, both Jewish and non-Jewish, to attend services and to actively participate in the worship by reciting both the Hebrew and the English liturgy of the service. While some specific worship rituals are traditionally performed by Jews, we make every effort to fully involve both Jewish and non-Jewish family members.

### **Friday Night Service Family Participation**

#### **Candle Lighting:**

The Shabbat candles are lit by the immediate family members of the B'nei Mitzvah. After the candles are lit, the traditional Hebrew blessing is recited by the congregation. Both Jewish and non-Jewish family members may be called up to stand at the candle lighting table. The immediate family will also be called up to the Bimah at the end of services to say Kiddush and Motzi.

### **Saturday Morning Service Family Participation**

#### **Tallit Presentation:**

The tallit is typically presented by parent(s) or grandparent(s). The tallit may be presented privately before the service begins or publicly on the Bimah. If the presenter(s) choose to say a few words, the presentation should be no longer than two minutes.

#### ***L'dor V'dor* ("From Generation to Generation": Passing the Torah)**

After the ark is opened, the Rabbi will call up the immediate family and any grandparents and/or great-grandparents present to pass the Torah from the oldest generation to the youngest generation as a symbol of the transmission of the Jewish tradition. This is often a highlight of the service.

#### ***Aliyot l'Torah***

*Aliyot l'Torah* refers to going up to the Bimah to read or chant the Torah blessings before and after the reading of the Torah. There are typically three aliyot. The first is read or chanted by designated guests over the age of 13, the second is read or chanted by the parent(s) and/or older siblings of the B'nei Mitzvah, and the final one is read or chanted by the B'nei Mitzvah. Honorees may be called to the pulpit in groups. The text of the Torah blessings is included in Appendix 3.

***G'lilah (Undressing and Dressing the Torah):***

This honor can be given to any close family members or friends. The *g'lilah* (wrapper) assists the Rabbi in undressing and dressing the Torah.

***Petichat Aron (opening and closing the Ark):***

This honor may go to any family member or close family friend. The Ark will be opened and closed as directed by the Rabbi. When there are several family members whom you wish to honor, it is possible to invite two or more people for the honor of *petichat aron*. This is often a good honor for younger siblings or cousins. The Ark is closed slowly, as a way to demonstrate our reluctance to depart from the presence of the Torah.

## GIFTS FROM THE CONGREGATION

On the morning of each B'nei Mitzvah, either the president or a representative of the Board of Trustees will present the B'nei Mitzvah with a gift from the congregation.

# FOOD AND PHOTOGRAPHY

## FRIDAY EVENING ONEG SHABBAT / SHABBAT MORNING LUNCH

On the evening before the ceremony, the Oneg Shabbat reception at the conclusion of the Friday evening *Kabbalat* Shabbat worship service is customarily sponsored by the B'nei Mitzvah family. The Oneg Shabbat generally includes wine, grape juice, Challah (two loaves), water or punch, and an assortment of sweets, fruit, or cheese.

Please contact the CBS Oneg Chair to arrange to host your Oneg and confirm the date.

The Shabbat Lunch following Shabbat morning services is sponsored by the B'nei Mitzvah family. This lunch is generally a cold meal and can be very simple. Be sure to check the CBS Kashrut policy summarized below.

Please contact the Office and CBS Oneg Chair for guidance regarding hosting the Shabbat evening Oneg Shabbat and the Shabbat morning lunch.

## KASHRUT POLICY

All food served in the synagogue or on synagogue grounds shall conform to the following Kashrut Policy as adopted by the Board of Trustees of the congregation.

**No pork or shellfish in any form shall be brought into the temple at any time.**

**The meal must be exclusively meat or dairy.** (It is not acceptable to serve a recipe that includes both cheese and meat).

## PHOTOGRAPHY

ALL still photography taken in the sanctuary **must be concluded 1/2 hour before the service.** It is recommended that all photographs be taken on a day prior to the B'nei Mitzvah service.

**No still camera pictures are to be taken during the service except from the social hall.**

**If a video camera will be used, it must be stationed in the social hall for the entire service. No additional lights may be used during services.**

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

### 1. Who wears a Kippah (head covering)?

Answer: Worshipers at CBS often wear a kippah to preserve the Jewish tradition that demonstrates humility before God. Kippot are available in the sanctuary vestibule for your use. Within Reform tradition, it is acceptable for both male and female worshipers to wear a kippah. Non-Jews may also wear a kippah, if they wish, as a sign of respect and support.

### 2. Who wears a Tallit?

Answer: Wearing of the tallit, the prayer shawl, is optional in our congregation. The tallit is worn during morning services. Because the wearing of the Tallit signifies an adherence to the commandments of the Torah, the tallit should only be worn by Jews over the age of 13. Within Reform tradition, it is acceptable for both male and female worshipers to wear a tallit. Tallitot are available in the lobby for your use. If you will be honored with an aliyah, we especially encourage you to wear a tallit while you are on the Bimah. The B'nei Mitzvah will wear a tallit publicly for the first time at the service.

### 3. What clothing should the family and the B'nei Mitzvah wear to the ceremony?

Answer: All attending the service should wear modest clothing that reflects respect for our tradition, such as might be worn for a formal occasion. We ask that all those going up to the Bimah, particularly the B'nei Mitzvah child, wear formal, business-appropriate clothing for the service itself. For example, please do not wear shorts during the service, and please ensure your shoulders are covered while you are on the Bimah.

### 4. When should immediate family arrive at the synagogue on the morning of the service?

Answer: The immediate family will arrange an arrival time with the synagogue director. The immediate family typically arrives between 9:30 and 10:00 am. The B'nei Mitzvah student will have the opportunity to meet with the Rabbi at 10:15 am. The service begins at 10:30 am.

### 5. How do I plan for vacation if my B'nei Mitzvah will be held during the summer or early fall?

Answer: Students should not be away the last four (4) weeks before the service. Be sure to notify the Education Director of your vacation plans well in advance so that the schedule of study can be appropriately adjusted.

### 6. How can we thank the congregation?

Answer: Many families show their appreciation by giving a gift to the synagogue in honor of the B'nei Mitzvah. Others make a contribution to one of the synagogue's funds to honor this special milestone. The *simcha* (joyous event) may also be celebrated by purchasing a leaf on the tree of life dedication board in the temple lobby.

7. We have heard it is customary to give a gift of tzedakah during times of celebration. What are some possible recipients?

Answer: There are several Jewish organizations, locally and nationally, that would benefit from gifts of tzedakah, including:

- MAZON: A Jewish Response to Hunger  
<http://www.mazon.org/>
- American Jewish World Service  
<http://www.ajws.org/>
- Jewish World Watch  
<http://www.jewishworldwatch.org/>
- Hebrew Free Loan Association  
<http://www.hflasf.org/>
- And many others!

# CONTACT INFORMATION

Congregation Beth Shalom Office: 707-253-7305

Rabbi Niles Goldstein: [rabbi@cbsnapa.org](mailto:rabbi@cbsnapa.org)

Lauren Kaplan, Synagogue Director: [office@cbsnapa.org](mailto:office@cbsnapa.org)

Leah Savage, Education and Engagement Coordinator: [leah@cbsnapa.org](mailto:leah@cbsnapa.org)

Gordon Lustig: [gordondlustig@gmail.com](mailto:gordondlustig@gmail.com)

Website: [www.cbsnapa.org](http://www.cbsnapa.org)

# B'NEI MITZVAH TIMELINE

## 12 to 18 Months before:

- ♦ **Select and Reserve Date** Requests must be accompanied by payment of \$500 (50% of B'nei Mitzvah fee). Financial difficulties may be discussed confidentially with the synagogue's President and Director.
- ♦ **The Education Director will assess the child's progress in Hebrew.** The Education Director may recommend that the child meet with a B'nei Mitzvah tutor, engaged at the family's expense, to supplement the child's education in the CBS Hebrew program.

## 12 Months before:

- ♦ **Meet with Rabbi Goldstein to discuss B'nei Mitzvah process, and meet with Mitzvah Maven to select Mitzvah Mentor.** Selection of Two Personal Mitzvot Commitments - Ethical and Ritual

## 9 to 12 months before:

- ♦ **Begin regular meetings with the Mitzvah Mentor.**
- ♦ **During CBS Hebrew program sessions, the child will begin to work on the Torah and Haftarah portions.**

## 3 to 9 months before:

- ♦ **Meet with Music Director to discuss the music in the service.**

## 3 months before:

- ♦ **Contact CBS office and complete all events forms and agree on room set up and confirm custodial services.**

## 2-3 months before:

- ♦ **Meet with Rabbi to discuss and begin *D'var Torah*.** This will be followed by communication with the Rabbi on content and structure of the speech.

## 1 month before:

- ♦ **Pay remainder of B'nei Mitzvah fee.**
- ♦ **Contact the Chair of the Mitzvah Mavens** to assist with Friday night oneg and/or Saturday Lunch.
- ♦ **Contact the CBS office** and refine and finalize all event forms and all custodial requirements.
- ♦ **Arrange Friday Evening and Saturday Beverages** with Oneg Chair and Mitzvah Mavens.

## 1 to 2 weeks before:

- ♦ **Rehearsal of entire Service with Rabbi.**
- ♦ **Submit Honors List (Appendix 4) to Rabbi.**
- ♦ **Submit Attendance Numbers and Social Hall/Outdoor Table Arrangement to Office.**



# CONGREGATION BETH SHALOM B'NEI MITZVAH BRIT

## COMMITMENT TO STUDY

Parent(s) agree to encourage student to study and work on all of the B'nei Mitzvah materials.

Parent(s) agree to adjust schedules so as to be available to help student with studying and practicing.

Student agrees to study all of the B'nei Mitzvah materials.

Student agrees to make the time to study and prepare for the B'nei Mitzvah effectively.

Student and parent(s) agree to talk about issues that arise from the pressures of study.

## LIFELONG LEARNING

We understand that the B'nei Mitzvah ceremony does not signify the completion of Jewish study. **We, therefore, agree that the student will continue his/her involvement in Jewish life and learning through participation in the post-B'nei Mitzvah programs at Congregation Beth Shalom.**

We have read the B'nei Mitzvah Handbook and agree to follow the guidelines and policies within it.

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Student

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Date

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Parent

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Parent

# APPENDIX 1: B'NEI MITZVAH PRAYER LIST

PRAYER	PAGE #
Tallit Blessing	190
Morning Blessings	198-202
Barchu	226
Shema	232
V'ahavta	234
Adonai S'fatai	242
Avot v'Imahot	244
G'vurot	246
Torah Service	366
Before/After Torah	368
Before/After Haftarah	372
Kiddush	123
Motzi	

English readings as determined by the Rabbi and the B'nei Mitzvah.

# APPENDIX 2: MITZVAH MENTOR WORKSHEET

B'nei Mitzvah's name \_\_\_\_\_

Mitzvah Mentor's Name \_\_\_\_\_ Email \_\_\_\_\_ Cell \_\_\_\_\_

Each child will work with a Mitzvah Mentor on two Mitzvah Commitments: one Ritual Commitment and one Ethical Commitment. The Mitzvah Mentor will meet with the child approximately once a month and will help the child plan their ritual and ethical commitments, will provide them with guidance as they continue to work on them, and will check in on their progress.

**The Mitzvah Mentor will fill out the following form to attest that the child has completed this requirement. The Mitzvah Mentor may fill out the form privately after each meeting with the child, or may fill it out during meetings with the child's input.**

**Ritual Mitzvah Commitment:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Ethical Mitzvah Commitment:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

1) Date of session: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics discussed regarding ritual and/or ethical commitment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

2) Date of session: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics discussed regarding ritual and/or ethical commitment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

3) Date of session: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics discussed regarding ritual and/or ethical commitment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

4) Date of session: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics discussed regarding ritual and/or ethical commitment: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

5) Date of session: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics discussed regarding ritual and/or ethical commitment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

6) Date of session: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics discussed regarding ritual and/or ethical commitment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

7) Date of session: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics discussed regarding ritual and/or ethical commitment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

8) Date of session: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics discussed regarding ritual and/or ethical commitment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

9) Date of session: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics discussed regarding ritual and/or ethical commitment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

10) Date of session: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics discussed regarding ritual and/or ethical commitment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

11) Date of session: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics discussed regarding ritual and/or ethical commitment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

12) Date of session: \_\_\_\_\_

Topics discussed regarding ritual and/or ethical commitment: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Mitzvah Mentor attestation**

I, \_\_\_\_\_, attest that this student, \_\_\_\_\_,  
has worked on the Ritual Mitzvah Commitment over the course of the past year.

**Mitzvah Mentor initial and date** \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

I, \_\_\_\_\_, attest that this student, \_\_\_\_\_,  
has worked on the Ethical Mitzvah Commitment over the course of the past year.

**Mitzvah Mentor initial and date** \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_

Any final reflections/comments:

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# APPENDIX 3: BLESSINGS FOR TORAH READING/ ALIYAH

## Blessing before the Torah reading

The one called to the Torah reads/chants:

בָּרְכוּ יְיָ הַמְּבֹרָךְ:

*Barchu et Adonai ham'vorach.*

Praise Adonai, the Blessed One.

The congregation responds, and the one called to the Torah repeats:

בָּרוּךְ יְיָ הַמְּבֹרָךְ לְעוֹלָם וָעֶד:

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

Praised be Adonai, who is blessed for ever and ever.

The one called to the Torah reads/chants:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ אֱלֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם,  
אֲשֶׁר בָּחַר בָּנוּ מִכָּל הָעַמִּים  
וְנָתַן לָנוּ אֶת תּוֹרָתוֹ:  
בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה יְיָ, נוֹתֵן הַתּוֹרָה:

*Baruch Atah Adonai, elo-heinu melech ha-olam,  
asher bachar banu mi-kol ha-amim  
v'natan lanu et Torah-to.  
Baruch Atah Adonai, noten ha-Torah.*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who has chosen us from among all the nations, and given us the Torah. Blessed are You, Adonai, Provider of the Torah.

## Blessing after the Torah reading

After the conclusion of the Torah reading, the one called to the Torah reads/chants:

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

*Baruch Atah Adonai, elo-heinu melech ha-olam, asher natan lanu Torat emet,  
v'cha-yei olam nata b'to-cheinu. Baruch Atah Adonai, noten ha-Torah.*

Blessed are You, Adonai our God, Ruler of the universe, who has given us the Torah of truth, and implanted within us eternal life. Blessed are You, Adonai, Provider of the Torah.

# APPENDIX 4: HONORS CHECKLIST

Please send the following information to the Rabbi one week prior to the date of the B'nei Mitzvah. You may either fill out, scan, and email this form, OR simply type the information below into an email.

**Date of Service:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B'nei Mitzvah's English name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**B'nei Mitzvah's Hebrew name, if known:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Parents' names (English and Hebrew, if known):** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Mitzvah Mentor:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Presenter(s) of the tallit, if this will be done publicly on the Bimah:** typically presented by parents or grandparents. \_\_\_\_\_

**L'dor Vador/Passing the Torah:** Jewish grandparents' and great-grandparents' names who are attending: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Petichat Aron (opening and closing the Ark):** one or more family members or friends; a good role for children. \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**G'lilah (Undressing and Dressing the Torah):** one or more family members or friends.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Aliyot l'Torah (blessings before and after the Torah readings):**

1) One Or More Guests, Age 13 Or Older: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

2) Parents and/or Older Siblings: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

3) B'nei Mitzvah