MESSAGE TO B’NAI MITZVAH PARENTS

*Mazel Tov!* You are about to embark on a meaningful journey of spiritual growth and celebration for your entire family. While this is certainly an exciting time in your life, we know it can also be stressful to plan and organize. This booklet is intended to provide general information to help you plan your *simcha*. We would also be delighted to meet with you to answer questions.

As you begin to contemplate the kind of celebration you want, we hope you will consider The Community Synagogue as an ideal venue. By holding all or part of your celebration here, you are offering great convenience to your guests, while putting the synagogue at the heart of your religious celebration. The Community Synagogue has an extensive list of approved caterers to ensure that your party is tailored to your individual budget and needs. Whether you are planning a *Kiddush* luncheon, afternoon reception or evening affair, we offer a beautiful building, flexible indoor and outdoor party space, full service kitchen, and breathtaking grounds.

The following information provides an overview of the various elements to the *Bar/Bat Mitzvah* weekend, as well as catering options for your consideration.

The Community Synagogue is a place of openness to all, a place of strength and beauty, of spirituality and learning, of creative possibility, a place filled with God’s spirit and human kindness.
EREV SHABBAT (Friday evening services)

The Friday evening service is a beautiful start to your celebratory Bar/Bat Mitzvah weekend. During this service, the bar/bat mitzvah family(ies) are invited to the bimah to light candles, receive a special blessing from the clergy and recite Kiddush (blessing over the wine.)

Services are followed by a special Oneg Shabbat celebration, a time to enjoy dessert and socialize in order to create a deeper sense of community. It is a beautiful custom in our synagogue that close friends of the b’nai mitzvah family(ies) provide a celebratory dessert for the congregation to enjoy.

Friday night services begin either at 6:30 pm or 8:00 pm and last until approximately 7:30 pm or 9:15 pm, respectively, with the Oneg to follow. Once a month our family service, “Second Shabbes,” begins at 6:30 pm. Generally, once a month our “Shabbat Rocks” service, accompanied by a four piece band, also begins at 6:30 pm.

SHABBAT DINNER

For your convenience, we are happy to offer space for a lovely Shabbat dinner before services for your family, friends and guests. Our facility can accommodate a fully catered dinner, an informal buffet, or a self-catered “Drop and Go” option where food platters can be dropped off. Contact the Main Office for more details about these options.

Suggested times for Shabbat dinners are:

6:30 pm Shabbat service.............Dinner time approximately 5:15 pm
8:00 pm Shabbat service............. Dinner time approximately 6:30 pm
Planning an Oneg Shabbat
Attendance at Friday night services is usually in the range of 100-150 people. If there is a special Shabbat event sponsored by the synagogue, where many more attendees are expected, others will help with providing food items for the Oneg Shabbat. The office staff can apprise you of these events in advance.

☐ SET UP ON FRIDAY AFTERNOON: The Oneg Shabbat generally takes place in the Congregational Hall, adjacent to the rear of the sanctuary. Set up is on Friday afternoon (approximately 1:00 pm.) The Maintenance Staff will have the tables and chairs set up before then so your Oneg coordinators can decorate and set up food.

☐ WHEN TO DROP OFF FOOD FOR THE ONEG: Desserts and beverages may be dropped off in the synagogue kitchen anytime on Friday. The kitchen refrigerator is available for use. Please label all food and drink for the Oneg.

☐ USE OF THE KITCHEN/CLEANUP: The kitchen storage closet holds serving pieces available for your use. If items are borrowed, we request that they be returned clean so they may be used by other families. Friends help with clean up and make arrangements for leftover food to be donated. The Maintenance staff is on hand to assist with set up and clean up.

☐ THE SYNAGOGUE IS PLEASED TO PROVIDE:
• coffee and tea service, milk, sugar, Equal or Splenda • The following are available upon request: beige plastic knives/forks/spoons, paper plates, ceramic coffee cups, hot cups, navy or white round and rectangular tablecloths.

☐ FRIENDS/FAMILY TYPICALLY PROVIDE:
• fruit platter(s) • cookies and baked goods • candy or other sweet treats • beverages • colorful tablecloths • center pieces.
ONEG TABLE SET UP:

One 72” round with two 8’ rectangular tables flanking each side of the round table for food.

Three 72” round guest tables with ten chairs at each for seating.

Two 8’ rectangular tables set up for hot and cold beverages.

Larger groups may be accommodated with additional seating and tables, upon request.
CATERED EVENTS/PARTIES

Our facility is a beautiful and convenient venue to host your guests after services for a quick Kiddush or a more elaborate luncheon or evening reception. The facility can be rented on an hourly basis with a two hour minimum.

• A traditional Kiddush (i.e. bagels and appetizing) is approximately two hours in duration immediately following services. This celebration which is held in one room, either the Multi-purpose Room or the Congregational Hall, can be extended up to 4 hours.

• A more elaborate reception of 4-5 hours

Our beautiful facility is a perfect venue for a full afternoon or evening celebration. We can provide a large open space to accommodate up to 300 guests or can create a smaller more intimate space if desired. The Lobby, Multi-Purpose Room and Congregational Hall are all available for your use and provide unlimited opportunities to tailor your party according to your tastes. Whether a sit down catered affair or a kids’ dance and games party, the facility is flexible and can be easily transformed.

Included in our facility rental are tables and chairs, a sound system, large video screen for viewing photo montages and a full service kitchen. Valet parking can be arranged at the renter’s expense. Evening parties must end by 1:00 a.m. per the Village of Sands Point code.

• A “Kiddush-to-Go” option is available. Your guests are offered pre-bagged snacks/light lunch and/or “Coffee-to-Go” to take with them as they leave after services. Tables can be set up in the lobby to accommodate your pre-bagged food. Seating is not provided.

ROOM RENTAL RATES
(SEE INSERT FOR CURRENT PRICING)
IMPORTANT CATERING POLICIES

KASHRUT POLICY: The synagogue adheres to certain basic Kashrut (Kosher) guidelines which are: no serving of shellfish or pork or any foods that contain shellfish or pork. Congregants are encouraged (but not required) to not mix meat and dairy foods on the same plate.

NUT-FREE POLICY: In order to be sensitive to children and adults with nut allergies, the synagogue prohibits serving any foods containing nuts. Nut residue can be dangerous to those who are highly allergic.

ALCOHOL: Alcohol at parties can only be served by approved caterers who have a liquor license and/or liquor liability insurance.

LEFTOVER FOOD: It is a mitzvah to feed the hungry. Please make arrangements in advance to donate any leftover food from your party. A representative from the Mitzvah Corps can assist you with this. Contact information is available in the enclosed insert.

FACILITY SHARING: In the event two B’nai Mitzvah families are interested in using the facility for separate functions, we will work to accommodate both. However, individual rooms will be reserved on a first come basis. If there are two celebrations, we encourage both families to use the same caterer, as the kitchen facility can only accommodate one caterer at a time.

If families cannot agree on one caterer, or if a caterer has already been secured prior to the second booking, the family/caterer in the Multi-purpose Room will not have use of the kitchen. Happily, families generally work well together and often agree on using the same caterer.

APPROVED CATERERS (SEE INSERT FOR APPROVED LIST)

For your convenience the synagogue provides a diverse group of approved caterers who provide high quality food at various price points and who are familiar with our facility and procedures. We would be happy to help you select one of our approved caterers to fit your individual needs.
BAR OR BAT MITZVAH

The term Bar or Bat Mitzvah (literally, "son or daughter of the commandments") is a title given to all Jews reaching their 13th birthday to signify that they are now prepared to take personal responsibility for their own religious actions and moral behavior through performing the mitzvot (commandments.)

As you become an adult member of the Jewish community, we look forward to you joining with us in our people's journey.

Adult B’nai Mitzvah opportunities are available to those who wish to study Torah.