



TEMPLE B'NAI ISRAEL
OKLAHOMA CITY

B'nai Mitzvah Handbook

TABLE OF CONTENTS

Becoming B'nai Mitzvah at Temple B'nai Israel	3
Contact information	3
The B'nai Mitzvah Process – Requirements and Expectations	4-5
Eligibility	
Scheduling	
Meeting with the Executive Director	
Bar/Bat Mitzvah Orientation Meetings (TBD if these will still happen)	
Meetings with Rabbi Harris	
Meetings/Tutoring with Zemer Sweenie	
Materials	
Rehearsals with Student and Family	
A Mitzvah Project	
Responsibilities of Bar/Bat Mitzvah	6
For Students Celebrating on Shabbat Morning	
For Students Celebrating on Friday Evening (Erev Shabbat)	
Responsibilities of the Parents	7
Assigning Honors	
Passing Down the Torah	
Parent Blessing	
Friday Night Oneg Shabbat	
Saturday Morning Kiddush Luncheon	
Leaflet (optional)	
Obligated to the Commandments – How to Give Back	8
Guidelines for Parent Blessing	9
Guidelines for Those Called to the Torah (Aliyah)	10-11
Temple Policies	12
B'nai Mitzvah Timeline	13-14
Publicity	15
Honors Sheet/Explanation of Honors– Shabbat Morning	16-17
Honors Sheet/Explanation of Honors – Friday Night Only	18-19

Becoming B'nai Mitzvah at Temple B'nai Israel

Becoming bar/bat mitzvah is a significant life cycle event that obligates your student to observe the commandments as he or she takes the first steps to Jewish adulthood. Preparation includes learning in our ICSS program, attending worship with our Temple community, and realizing the goals set forth in our Hebrew School Mission statement:

Our program welcomes students and Temple families of diverse backgrounds in the study of liturgical Hebrew. The program offers a positive environment to provide students a foundation for becoming b'nai mitzvah, interacting as Jews in the larger community, and supports families engaged in this process. The program strives to inspire commitment to Reform Jewish prayer, study of Torah, and their relevance for today.

Upon completion of the Hebrew Program, students should be able to:

- Demonstrate a competence in Hebrew reading*
- Communicate the history and meaning of certain prayers and rituals*
- Prepare for participating in a Shabbat service celebrating their becoming bar/bat mitzvah*
- Identify connections between themselves and other Jews, Judaism, and the larger Jewish community*
- Apply their Jewish learning to experiences in the secular world*

We are excited to join with you and your student on this next phase of his or her Jewish journey!

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The B'nai Mitzvah Process **Requirements and Expectations**

Eligibility

Jewish boys and girls become b'nai mitzvah at age thirteen. Other eligibility requirements at the Temple include enrollment in Hebrew School and the family being members in good standing.

Scheduling

B'nai mitzvah are celebrated during Friday evening and Shabbat morning services. When families opt for a Friday-only celebration, the service remains predominantly a congregational Shabbat worship service with the student teaching and reading Torah. Saturday morning includes more options for family and student participation.

The date for the Bar/Bat Mitzvah service should be set with the Rabbi at least one year in advance and cleared on the Temple calendar through the Executive Director. Dates will be cross-checked through the Jewish Federation of Oklahoma City, Emanuel Synagogue and Chabad to ensure only one bar or bat mitzvah in our community on any given Shabbat. **When scheduling your date, please keep in mind Sha'arei Shabbat is usually the second Friday of every month, with services at 6:30 pm, followed by a 7:30 pm congregational dinner. Tot Shabbat is the third Saturday of the month in the chapel. When there is a bar or bat mitzvah, Tot Shabbat families are invited to stay for the Kiddush luncheon. Check with the rabbi or the educator to confirm whether or not your preferred date is scheduled as a Shaarei Shabbat or a Tot Shabbat.**

Meeting with Executive Director

Approximately 9-12 months in advance, contact the Executive Director to arrange for Temple facilities, and discuss costs. The Executive Director will then provide you with a cost estimate. The exact costs will be calculated after the bar/bat mitzvah and be billed to you. The Executive Director will also communicate with the custodial supervisor to ensure proper set-ups for the Friday night Oneg Shabbat and Kiddush luncheon on Saturday.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Orientation Family Meetings

Hebrew school class dinners/orientations occur once a year and give families information about ongoing preparation for children becoming b'nai mitzvah. In addition, parents and guardians are encouraged to reach out to other adults from the class to build relationships through informal gatherings, joining together on volunteer projects, and generally getting to know each other to increase the depth of connectedness between Temple families.

Meetings with Rabbi Harris

Students begin working with Rabbi Harris approximately 4 months prior to the date of their b'nai mitzvah. Rabbi Harris assists the students with understanding the meaning and context of the Torah and Haftarah portions. She guides in the selection of Torah and Haftarah verses, provides context and resources that enable each student to prepare at least one speech to teach the congregation about the sacred text, and reviews speech drafts to help each student clarify his or her ideas in written form. (Note: Friday night only b'nai mitzvah focus only on Torah.) She also asks parents to complete an Honors Worksheet (see pages 16-19) that designates which family members and friends will participate in the bar/bat mitzvah service.

Meetings/Tutoring with Zemer Sweenie

Beginning approximately 4 months prior to the bar/bat mitzvah date, Zemer Sweenie will meet weekly for 45 minutes with the student to assist in mastering the Hebrew text and cantillation for the Torah and Haftarah verses he/she has chosen, and the blessings surrounding the Torah service. The student will be given weekly assignments, and be expected to practice at home regularly. Students are also expected to attend Shabbat worship regularly to increase mastery of the prayers in the Shabbat service. At the start of tutoring, students, parents and Zemer Sweenie will commit to a series of expectations to ensure a shared vision for working towards bar/bat mitzvah. This will include commitments of study time and Shabbat worship attendance, and will be customized to meet each student's goals.

Several weeks prior to the bar/bat mitzvah date, the family will meet with Zemer to determine which prayers and melodies will be used during the service. Rabbi and Zemer will assess the student's interest in leading Hebrew prayers that have been learned through Hebrew School and worship attendance, and determine which prayers he/she will lead.

Materials

During the final year of Hebrew school, each student is presented with his or her own *siddur* as a generous gift from Temple members Jeff and Lori Blumenthal. At the first tutoring session, Zemer Sweenie provides each student a booklet that includes a copy of his or her Torah and Haftarah portions in Hebrew, along with English translations and helpful commentary. During the course of study, Zemer also provides audio recordings of the chanted verses which students may use as a reference during at-home study.

Rehearsals with Student and Family

The student will practice reading from the Torah scroll 2-3 weeks prior to the bar/bat mitzvah service. Rabbi and Zemer will conduct a full rehearsal with the student and family.

A Mitzvah Project

All students are asked to commit to a mitzvah project as part of becoming b'nai mitzvah. Projects range from hands-on volunteering at a local organization, to arranging a tzedakah drive for donations, to raising awareness about issues important to the student and tikkun olam. Rabbi and Zemer will periodically monitor the student's progress on his/her mitzvah project, and the student will report on the project as part of his/her speech(es) at the service.

Responsibilities of the Bar/Bat Mitzvah

During the Shabbat service, the student participates in three areas: leading prayers, reading from Torah and Haftarah, and teaching the congregation about the significance of those readings (D'var Torah).

Leading Prayer

Most of the Hebrew prayers for the service are learned through Hebrew school and regular attendance at Shabbat worship. At the Temple, we strive to tailor each student's bar/bat mitzvah preparation to ensure the highest level of comfort and success. Students are encouraged to lead the prayers with which they are most competent and confident.

Reading Torah

Each student studies and prepares one to three *aliyot* (each *aliyah* is at least 3 verses) from the weekly Torah portion. Students may choose or be asked to read more or less in consultation with the rabbi. Friday night-only b'nai mitzvah read one aliyah, although it could still include as many total verses as a Saturday morning service.

In preparation with Zemer, the student learns to chant the Torah verses using traditional cantillation melodies. He or she also works towards mastery of the blessings surrounding the Torah and Haftarah readings.

Reading Haftarah

On Saturday morning, following the reading of Torah, the bar/bat mitzvah student reads or chants verses from Haftarah. The number of verses will be determined by the rabbi. Please note: Friday-night only b'nai mitzvah do not include Haftarah.

Teaching the Congregation

The student will prepare speeches to introduce the weekly Torah and corresponding Haftarah readings. This teaching will be prepared in consultation with the rabbi, and parents are expected to assist their child with development of ideas, proper grammar, spelling, form, and public speaking.

Friday Night/Saturday Morning

It is customary for students celebrating their b'nai mitzvah on Saturday morning to also participate in the Friday night service. This usually includes leading a few prayers, along with Kiddush and Motzi at the end of the service.

Responsibilities of the Parents

Assigning Bima Honors

Parents assign honors to family and friends for Friday night and Saturday morning. These include ushers, candle lighting, Torah blessings, ark opening, etc. See pages 16-19 for the Honors Worksheets, and for specific information about parameters for distributing honors.

Passing Down the Torah

The tradition of physically passing the Torah from grandparents, to parents, to the child is available for those who wish to do it, though it is optional.

Parent Blessing

Parents may publically bless their children after they have concluded their Torah and Haftarah reading. This blessing should be no more than 600 words in total. See pages 9 for guidelines and sample blessings.

Friday Night Oneg Shabbat

The family is responsible for providing the cookies, cakes and other treats for the Oneg Shabbat after the service. Parents are also responsible for trayng the items and arranging them on the tables. This is usually done on Friday morning, and families often enlist friends and classmates to help. Following the Oneg, the family or their delegates re-tray sweets for Saturday.

Saturday Morning Kiddush Luncheon

It is customary for the family to provide a light meal after the service for all who attend. Parents may enlist friends and family to help them set out food, re-tray sweets from the previous evening to set out as dessert, etc. Expectations, table set ups, and other specifics should be part of your discussion with the Executive Director.

Leaflet (optional)

Families who choose to produce a personalized leaflet handout for the service with information about Jewish worship and personal greetings will work with the Executive Director to ensure accurate wording, formatting, etc.

Obligated to the Commandments – How to Give Back

The bar or bat mitzvah marks a coming of age, when the student becomes an “adult” in the eyes of the Jewish community. While a thirteen year old clearly doesn’t fit the modern notion of adulthood, in Judaism, adulthood means taking on the responsibilities of fulfilling God’s commandments. This is a great time for parents to talk with their children about the Jewish values *Talmud* Torah (Lifelong Learning), *Avodah* (Service to God), *Mitzvot* (Commandments), and *K’hilah* (Community).

The mitzvah project (see page 5) is one way to mark this new obligation. Giving *tzedakah* (the Jewish imperative to give to those in need) is another. Consider some of the ideas below as ways to work towards the Jewish value of *tikkun olam* (repairing the world):

- Join our Temple volunteers when they serve monthly meals at the Homeless Alliance.
- Volunteer at an organization or for a cause you care about.
- Raise awareness for a cause you care about.
- Make a donation or run a campaign to give to a cause that is important to you.
- Collect clothing, food, clothes, etc. for an organization of your choice that helps people in need.
- Participate in a walk or run that benefits a cause that is important to you.

There are many ways to help, so find an organization or cause that speaks to you and let becoming bar or bat mitzvah be your springboard to a lifetime of *gemilut chasadim*: acts of loving kindness.

Guidelines for Parent Blessing

Rabbi Eliezer ben Rabbi Shimon said: A man is responsible for his son until the age of thirteen; thereafter he must say, Blessed are You who has now freed me from the responsibility of the boy.
-Midrash Genesis Rabbah 63:10

While the preceding text seems humorous to most modern Jews, it shows us that our ancestors have ritualized blessing their thirteen year old children at least since rabbinic times. Today, we honor this custom by blessing our children as they take on the obligation of following the commandments.

At this important moment, when a child is called to the Torah, parents may choose to share their hopes and dreams for her or him. While this is a public statement, it should be addressed to the child or to God, and articulate the direction you pray his or her life will take. It is important to keep in mind that this is a blessing to your child, and not a speech about pride in accomplishments to this point.

Feel free to use the examples below, or to develop your own unique blessing of no more than 600 words (divided between parents however you wish).

Blessing Example 1

Into our hands, O God, You have placed Your Torah, to be held high by parents and children and taught by one generation to the next.

Whatever has befallen us, our people have remained steadfast in loyalty to the Torah. It was carried into exile in the arms of parents that their children might not be deprived of their birthright.

And now I pray that you, my child, will always be worthy of this inheritance. Take its teaching into your heart, and in turn pass it on to your children and those who come after you. May you be a faithful Jew, searching for wisdom and truth, working for justice and peace. Thus will you be among those who labor to bring nearer the day when God will be One and God's name will be One. (*Gates of Prayer Siddur*)

Blessing Example 2

May your eyes sparkle with the light of Torah,
and your ears hear the music of its words.
May the space between each letter of the scrolls
bring warmth and comfort to your soul.
May the syllables draw holiness from your heart,
and may this holiness be gentle and soothing
to you and all God's creatures.
May your study be passionate,
and meanings bear more meanings
until life arrays itself to you
as a dazzling wedding feast.
And may your conversation,
even of the commonplace,
be a blessing to all who listen to your words
and see the Torah glowing on your face. (*Danny Siegel*)

Blessing Example 3

Praised is God who has granted new responsibility to _____ and to us. As _____ begins to enjoy his/her new status among the Jewish people, a status that redefines our own role in his/her life, may God grant us the wisdom to continue as guides and counselors, allowing _____ to live in accordance with the teachings of our Torah as a responsible Jewish adult.

Baruch Ata Adonai Eloheinu Melech ha-olam

(For a male) *shep'tarani mei-ansho shelazeh.*

(For a female) *shep'tarani mei-anshah shelazoh.*

Praised are You, *Adonai* our God, who rules the universe, who has freed us of some responsibilities and conferred new ones upon _____. (*The Rabbinical Assembly*)

Guidelines for Those Called to the Torah (Aliyah)

The Hebrew word *aliyah* means to “ascend.” Those called to the Torah to recite the opening and closing *b'rachot* (blessings) literally “ascend” to the bima. But this also implies a spiritual ascent, as the honor of the *aliyah* is a sacred privilege in Judaism. Consequently, you must be Jewish and “of age” (i.e., a bar/bat mitzvah) to recite the *b'rachot*. In fact, becoming bar/bat mitzvah marks the first time a Jewish person may be called to the Torah for an *aliyah*.

Being Called to the Torah

The rabbi calls each individual to the Torah by his or her English and Hebrew name (if they have been given one). Parents provide this information to the rabbi in advance on the Honors Sheet (see pages).

Going Up

When your name is called, go up the steps to the *bima* and stand to the right of the reader. He or she will point to the place in the Torah scroll where they are reading. You may touch that spot with the *tzitzit*, (fringes) of your *tallit* (prayer shawl), or the corner of your *siddur* (prayer book), and then kiss the *tzitzit* or the *siddur*. At this point the reader can close the scroll and you may choose to grasp the two wooden posts of the scroll, or just stand near the reader while reciting the blessing in either Hebrew or English.

The Opening B'racha (Blessing)

Below is the blessing recited prior to the reading of the Torah. You should recite the first line, wait for the congregation to respond with the second line, then repeat that second line, and read the rest of the first blessing.

<i>Bar'chu et Adonai ham'vorach.</i>	Praised is the Eternal One, the One to be praised.
The congregation responds, <i>Baruch Adonai ham'vorach l'olam va-ed</i> (then you repeat)	Praised is the Eternal One, the One to be praised, forever.
<i>Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu melech haolam asher bachar banu mikol ha-amim v'natan lanu et Torato</i>	Praised are You, Eternal One our God, Sovereign of the Universe who chose us from all the peoples of the world and gave us God's Torah.
<i>Baruch Atah Adonai Notein haTorah</i>	Praised are You, Eternal One, Giver of Torah.
	The congregation responds, “Amein.”

The Torah Reading

Following the conclusion of the first *b'racha*, the reader will read the selection from the Torah.

The Closing *B'racha*

<p>You will recite the closing <i>b'racha</i> immediately after the Torah reading. Again, you may touch the scroll with the <i>tzitzit</i> of your <i>tallit</i> or the corner of your <i>siddur</i>, and may choose to grasp the posts of the Torah scroll, or just remain standing near the reader while reciting the blessing.</p> <p><i>Baruch Atah Adonai Eloheinu melech haolam</i></p>	<p>Praised are You, Eternal One, our God, Ruler of the universe</p>
<p><i>asher natan lanu Torat emet</i></p>	<p>who has given us a Torah of truth</p>
<p><i>V'chayei olam nata b'to cheinu</i></p>	<p>And implanted eternal life within us.</p>
<p><i>Baruch Atah Adonai notein ha Torah</i></p>	<p>Praised are You, Eternal One, Giver of Torah.</p>
	<p>The congregation responds, "Amein."</p>

After the Closing *B'racha*

After you have concluded the *b'racha*, move to the reader's left and remain until the conclusion of the next *aliyah*. Then return to your seat.

Temple Policies

During your meeting with the Executive Director, all fees and Temple policies will be explained and discussed. Please do not hesitate to call with any questions or concerns.

FLOWERS:

Please discuss the purchase and sponsorship of bima flowers with the Executive Director. Bima flower arrangements should be no more than 3 feet high, nor weigh more than 25 pounds. This allows our staff to move them to the Oneg.

PHOTOS:

No still photography is allowed in the Sanctuary during the service. Please share this information with your photographer.

VIDEO:

Must be set up in a location that will not block aisles. The videographer may not move around the sanctuary during the service. Please share this information with your videographer.

ALCOHOLIC BEVERAGES:

Only beer, champagne, and wine are allowed in the Temple.

STATEMENTS:

Will be mailed at the beginning of the following month and are due upon receipt.

CATERERS:

Are required to be in contact with the Executive Director when using Temple facilities the final week before and more frequently if needed. Caterers are required to review the Temple food policy, which will be provided to them by the Executive Director.

INVITATIONS

The Temple will publicize your simcha (see page 15) in the monthly Bulletin and the weekly What's NU email, which will serve as an invitation to the entire congregation to attend worship. We request invitations to services not be sent to Temple members. When only some members receive an invitation, others may think they are not welcome when, in fact, all members are always welcome to all Shabbat worship. If you plan an additional celebration after Shabbat, please keep in mind the core Jewish values of kindness, compassion and inclusion. When sending invitations, be sure to include all of your student's Hebrew School and ICSS classmates.

SAMPLE COPY INVITATION:

*Please share our joy as (child's name) is called to the Torah as Bar/Bat Mitzvah
(include date, Temple name and address, time, etc.)
Kiddush Luncheon following the service*

*The celebration continues on Saturday evening
(include time, venue name and address, type of event, i.e. dinner and dancing, attire, RSVP information, etc.)*

B'nai Mitzvah Timeline

12-24 Months in Advance

Contact Rabbi to set bar or bat mitzvah date

Be sure to stay enrolled in ICSS and Hebrew School (and attend regularly)

Continue to build friendships through Club54 and Jr. OKATY

9-12 Months in Advance

Attend Shabbat services regularly

Contact Executive Director to discuss Temple logistics, food policies, etc.

- Oneg
- Kiddush luncheon
- Friday night dinner (if applicable)

Some may want to:

- Select and reserve venue for parties
- Select and contract with caterers, photographers, etc.
- Select and contract with hotel for out-of-town guests

6 Months in Advance

Contact Rabbi to set up meetings to:

- Determine Torah verses
- Determine Haftarah verses
- Begin writing speeches
- Discuss mitzvah project

Contact Zemer to set up tutoring schedule

4 Months in Advance

Begin tutoring with Zemer

Continue to meet with Rabbi for speeches

2-3 Months in Advance

Provide Executive Director with photo & bio

Develop service cues with Zemer

Ask friends and parents of classmates to bake for the Oneg, help tray, and help re-tray for Shabbat morning Kiddush luncheon

Some may want to:

- Create and mail invitations
- Plan for Oneg and Kiddush Luncheon centerpieces and decorations
- Shop for tallit
- Discuss mitzvah project

1 Month in Advance

Schedule rehearsal with Rabbi & Zemer

Fill out Honors forms and give to Rabbi

Mark parts in siddur according to service cues

The Week of...

Rehearsal with Rabbi and Zemer. Bring:

- Siddur
- Speeches
- Shoes student will wear
- Tallit and/or kippa (if applicable)

Some may want to:

Create welcome bags for out-of-town guests

Confirm with Oneg bakers, trayers, order (or bake) challah, etc

Friday/Saturday

Friday morning – tray Oneg treats

Friday night arrive for service no later than 6:40 p.m.

Friday night after the oneg– re-tray Oneg treats for Saturday

Saturday morning arrive for service no later than 9:40 a.m.

Saturday after the luncheon – bring home centerpieces, leftovers, etc. (Note: we do not have a specific organization that accepts food after a Kiddush luncheon. We recommend calling places in advance if you would like to make arrangements to bring leftovers.)

Publicity

Two months prior to the bar/bat mitzvah, please provide the Executive Director with information about your student, along with **a recent photo** so we can let our Temple family know about your special event in the Temple Bulletin and in our weekly *What's Nu* email. Please include in your paragraph your student's name, the date of the bar/bat mitzvah, along with names of parents, siblings and grandparents, school and grade, mitzvah project, hobbies, etc.

SAMPLE BAR/BAT MITZVAH ANNOUNCEMENT:

The (Family Name) family invites you to share the joy as their son/daughter (Student Name) becomes Bar/Bat Mitzvah. (Student Name) is a (_____ grader) at (School Name, where he/she participates in (Extra Curricular Activities). He/she also enjoys (Hobbies). For his/her mitzvah project, he she is (Explain Mitzvah Project). (Student Name) is the son/daughter of (Parent Names), grandson/daughter of (Grandparent Names) and brother/sister of (Sibling Names).

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Honors Sheet
Temple B'nai Israel

Child's name: _____ Hebrew name: _____
Parent(s) name(s): _____ Hebrew name(s): _____
Child's birth date: _____ Date of bar/bat mitzvah: _____
Torah Portion: _____ Section Reading: _____ Haftarah: _____
Special notes: _____

Family distributes honors Friday night:

Ushers (need not be Jewish): _____
Candle lighting (person saying the blessing must be Jewish): _____

Friday night sitting on the bima:

(Please note: in the sanctuary, there are seats for 4 additional honorees to sit on the bima. Chairs are not added to the bima on Friday night. In the chapel there is seating on the bima for the bar/bat mitzvah but no additional honorees. For a chapel service this section need not be filled out.)

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|
| 1. <u>President/Board</u> | 3. _____ | 5. <u>Rabbi</u> | 7. _____ |
| 2. <u>Zemer</u> | 4. _____ | 6. <u>Bar/Bat Mitzvah</u> | 8. _____ |

Family distributes honors Shabbat morning:

Ushers (need not be Jewish): _____
Tallit presentation (optional, can also be private): _____
2 people – first ark opening (need not be Jewish): _____
1 person – dress/undress the Torah (need not be Jewish): _____
2 “alivot” – people or groups to bless Torah (must be Jewish):
a. English name(s): _____ Hebrew name(s): _____
b. English name(s): _____ Hebrew names(s): _____
2 people – second ark opening (need not be Jewish; can be same as above): _____
1 person or a group – kiddush and motzi (lead person must be Jewish): _____

Shabbat Morning sitting on the bima:

(Note: in the sanctuary, there are seats for 4 additional honorees to sit on the bima; up to two more seats can be added. For the chapel service this section is not filled out.)

- | | | | |
|---------------------------|----------|---------------------------|----------|
| 1. <u>President/Board</u> | 3. _____ | 5. <u>Rabbi</u> | 7. _____ |
| 2. <u>Zemer</u> | 4. _____ | 6. <u>Bar/Bat Mitzvah</u> | 8. _____ |

Kaddish names on the occasion of bar/bat mitzvah: _____

Other notes and information for the rabbi: _____

Presenters (Office will complete):

Temple, Brotherhood, Sisterhood, & Federation: _____ Youth: _____

Explanation of Honors

Ushers on Friday night and Shabbat morning – Family chooses one to three people to greet guests warmly, and hand out prayer books and service leaflets, located on the carts near the sanctuary doors. Ushers should arrive by 6:45 p.m. on Friday nights, and by 9:45 a.m. on Shabbat morning. If guests are first-time Temple visitors, ushers may assist with basic questions, and let them know they can find specific information about Jewish worship on the laminated information in the front of the pews.

Sit on the Bima Friday night and Shabbat morning – Family chooses four people for Friday night and four people for Shabbat morning who will sit in the chairs on the bima in addition to the Rabbi, the Zemer, the President of the congregation and the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Bima-sitters may or may not have other honors in the service, and need not be Jewish. They should have prayerbooks with them to follow along and participate in the service. Friday night and Shabbat morning can be the same four people, or they can be different people for each of the services.

Candle Lighting Friday night – At least one Jewish person comes to the front of the sanctuary when the rabbi indicates, lights the candles, and reads the prayer in English or in Hebrew on page 2 of the prayerbook. Non-Jewish loved ones may also participate as long as a Jewish person is saying the prayer.

First Ark Opening, Shabbat morning – At least two people (no more than four) come to the bima when the rabbi asks the congregation to rise on page 244 or 246. Ark Openers slide open the Ark doors and stand by the Ark while the rabbi removes the Torah. The rabbi will tell you when to close the Ark. Stay at the Ark until the “Hakafah” (Processional) begins. You can follow the Torah in the Hakafah or return to your place in the congregation (or on the bima). Need not be Jewish.

Undress the Torah, Shabbat morning – One or two people to come up to the bima when the Torah is brought back after the Hakafah. Take the ornaments and mantle off of the Torah and put them on the Torah stand. The rabbi will assist or instruct you. Then return to your seats. Need not be Jewish.

Aliyah, Shabbat morning – One to three Jewish people per aliyah come to the bima when the rabbi indicates to say the blessings before and after the Torah reading on page 250. There are two aliyot, plus the Bar/Bat Mitzvah student. The Bar/Bat Mitzvah student will read the Torah for each aliyah. If you know your Hebrew name, please provide it to the rabbi in advance of the service. Those coming to the Torah for the blessings must be Jewish.

Dress the Torah, Shabbat morning – One or two people to put the mantle and ornaments back onto the Torah after it is read. When the Rabbi announces the congregation should rise for page 252 or 256, the Torah dressers come to the bima. Before the announcement but after the Torah reading there may be several other prayers. Need not be Jewish.

Second Ark Opening, Shabbat morning – At least two people (no more than four) come to the bima when the Rabbi asks the congregation to rise to return the Torah to the ark. Open the Ark and stay next to the Ark doors. The Rabbi will indicate when to close the Ark after the Torah is situated and the song is nearly concluded. Then return to your seats. Need not be Jewish.

Tallit Presentation, Shabbat morning (optional) – At least one person to present the bar/bat mitzvah student with a tallit. Please note this is a *brief* presentation focused on the religious significance of wearing tzitzit. Guidelines for what to say can be found on pages 72-73 of the prayer book. The student will be expected to say the prayer and wear the tallit. This presentation can also be done privately, or not at all.

Parent Blessings (optional) – Parents can choose to deliver a blessing to their child. This should be a blessing and not a speech. A blessing asks for God’s blessing and presence in your child’s life; it does not recount your child’s past – it looks to God’s presence with your child in the future. The blessing is limited to 600 words total. If more than one parent is speaking, it is up to the parents to determine how to divide the 600 words. A blessing focuses on the future merits and dreams a parent holds for a child and his/her relationship with God and the Jewish people. There are sample blessings on page 9 which you may use, or which may serve as guides for drafting your own personal blessing to your child.

Bar/Bat Mitzvah Honors Sheet
Temple B'nai Israel

Child's name: _____ Hebrew name: _____
Parent(s) name(s): _____ Hebrew name(s): _____
Child's birth date: _____ Date of bar/bat mitzvah: _____
Torah Portion: _____ Section Reading: _____
Special notes: _____

Family distributes honors Friday night:

Ushers (need not be Jewish): _____
Candle lighting (person saying the blessing must be Jewish): _____

Friday night sitting on the bima:

(Please note: in the sanctuary, there are seats for 4 additional honorees to sit on the bima. Chairs are not added to the bima on Friday night. In the chapel there is seating on the bima for the bar/bat mitzvah but no additional honorees. For a chapel service this section need not be filled out.)

<u>1. President/Board</u>	<u>3</u>	<u>5. Rabbi</u>	<u>7</u>
<u>2. Zemer</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>6. Bar/Bat Mitzvah</u>	<u>8</u>

Family distributes honors:

2 people – first ark opening (need not be Jewish): _____
1 person – dress/undress the Torah (need not be Jewish): _____
2 people – second ark opening (need not be Jewish; can be same as above): _____
1 person or a group – kiddush and motzi (lead person must be Jewish): _____

Kaddish names on the occasion of bar/bat mitzvah: _____

Other notes and information for the rabbi: _____

Presenters (Office will complete):

Temple, Brotherhood, Sisterhood, & Federation: _____ Youth: _____

Explanation of Honors

Ushers– Family chooses one to three people to greet guests warmly, and hand out prayer books and service leaflets, located on the carts near the sanctuary doors. Ushers should arrive by 6:45 p.m. on Friday night. If guests are first-time Temple visitors, ushers may assist with basic questions, and let them know they can find specific information about Jewish worship on the laminated information in the front of the pews.

Sit on the Bima– Family chooses four people for Friday night who will sit in the chairs on the bima in addition to the Rabbi, the Musician, the President of the congregation and the Bar/Bat Mitzvah. Bima-sitters may or may not have other honors in the service, and need not be Jewish. They should have prayerbooks with them to follow along and participate in the service.

Candle Lighting Friday night – At least one Jewish person comes to the front of the sanctuary when the rabbi indicates, lights the candles, and reads the prayer in English or in Hebrew on page 2 of the prayerbook. Non-Jewish loved ones may also participate as long as a Jewish person is saying the prayer.

First Ark Opening– At least two people (no more than four) come to the bima when the rabbi asks the congregation to rise on page 244 or 246. Ark Openers slide open the Ark doors and stand by the Ark while the rabbi removes the Torah. The rabbi will tell you when to close the Ark. Stay at the Ark until the “Hakafah” (Processional) begins. You can follow the Torah in the Hakafah or return to your place in the congregation (or on the bima). Need not be Jewish.

Undress the Torah– One or two people to come up to the bima when the Torah is brought back after the Hakafah. Take the ornaments and mantle off of the Torah and put them on the Torah stand. The rabbi will assist or instruct you. Then return to your seats. Need not be Jewish.

Dress the Torah– One or two people to put the mantle and ornaments back onto the Torah after it is read. When the Rabbi announces the congregation should rise for page 252 or 256, the Torah dressers come to the bima. Before the announcement but after the Torah reading there may be several other prayers. Need not be Jewish.

Second Ark Opening– At least two people (no more than four) come to the bima when the Rabbi asks the congregation to rise to return the Torah to the ark. Open the Ark and stay next to the Ark doors. The Rabbi will indicate when to close the Ark after the Torah is situated and the song is nearly concluded. Then return to your seats. Need not be Jewish.