

Tifereth Israel Congregation Handbook for Bat/Bar/Kabbalat Mitzvah

(Revised 05/3/2023)



Tifereth Israel Congregation (TI) provides this handbook to parents and prospective Bat/Bar/Kabbalat mitzvah to help prepare for their significant and joyous simcha (celebration).

Updated May 2023

If you are reading this, you are likely preparing your child to assume his/her/their place as an adult in our Jewish community.

Congratulations!

This is an exciting time, but it can also be confusing and overwhelming. The purpose of this Handbook is to welcome you to this process and to provide you an overview and reference point for what to expect when you are planning for a Bat, Bar, or Kabbalat (BBK) mitzvah. This is just the start of the journey we will go through together with you and your child. The TI community, including me, Rabbi Kelley, the TI professional staff and the BBK families, past and present, are here to support you as your child prepares for this joyous occasion.

This handbook is full of information. Some you will want to have at your fingertips right away and other pieces will help you as you progress through the process. No matter where you are in the journey, please know you can always reach out to me to help you find your way.

I am excited to be going through this process with you and your child and am always thrilled at the power of the day and the special moments we will share.

Sincerely,

Rabbi Michael Werbow

Being called to the Torah as a Bar, Bat, or Kabbalat (BBK) mitzvah, or in other ways celebrating becoming a BBK mitzvah, is an important milestone as our children immerse themselves in Jewish learning and formally recognize their commitment to Jewish life. This cherished ritual is a time for the entire community to come together and to plant the roots upon which a child can grow into living a Jewish life.

Our BBK mitzvah program is designed to help children understand what Judaism means to them personally and as a member of the Jewish community and of society. Through the program, they explore Torah, prayer, Jewish identity, and spirituality.

In addition to preparing children for BBK mitzvah, Tifereth Israel creates a structure for those who are studying for BBK mitzvah to come together, including a retreat. Preparation also includes special projects to heighten their awareness of the people and events happening in the community and the world.

Why do we call the B'nai mitzvah program BBK at Tifereth Israel? As an inclusive community, we want all BBK mitzvah—regardless of gender identity—to feel welcome and to be seen as they are. Some of our children have favored the term “Kabbalat Mitzvah” as a non-gendered term for this milestone, and we have supported them in this innovation.

BRINGING BBK MITZVAH INTO OUR COMMUNITY AS JEWISH ADULTS

At Tifereth Israel, BBK mitzvah students are congregants, participating in our services as part of our congregational family. We take pride in each BBK mitzvah as an individual who has achieved the requisite level of learning needed to serve as a Ba'al Tefillah (prayer leader), Ba'al Koreh (Torah reader); and chanter of the haftarah portion (a selection from the Prophets), as well as having reached the age to become full members of the Jewish community. We feel honored to be a part of this important point in your child's life, celebrating both your child's individual accomplishment and their place in our community. Accordingly, we try to strike a balance between emphasis on the rite as a personal achievement and the fact that this ceremony is a fully integrated aspect of our regular worship services.

GUIDELINES

Becoming a BBK mitzvah marks the point in your child's life when they take on the responsibility of becoming a Jewish adult. This section identifies the basic expectations for having a BBK mitzvah at TI. Please consult with the Rabbi if you have questions.

Age. The ceremony takes place after the student's 13th Hebrew birthday. NOTE: In some cases, girls may celebrate after their 12th birthday. If you would like to schedule a bat mitzvah prior to a girl's 13th birthday, or in the case of a kabbalat mitzvah, please speak with the Rabbi.

Education. Understanding what it means to take on the responsibilities of a Jewish adult is an important part of becoming a BBK mitzvah. Jewish education is, therefore, an essential part of the process. TI requires all students to actively engage in that education by attending TI's religious school, a Jewish day school, or other religious study approved by the Rabbi. Students must be enrolled and attend for a minimum of four full years immediately before the year of their BBK mitzvah and complete the entire academic year of their simcha. Remaining in school for the entire seventh grade year is instrumental in maintaining the cohesiveness of the BBK mitzvah class. To foster a sense of Jewish community, TI strongly encourages all students to attend a religious school in a group or classroom environment. We recognize that each child is unique, and there may be a compelling reason to choose individual learning rather than the classroom. If you choose individual learning, we encourage you to talk to the Rabbi about how to help your child become connected to the TI community.

Finally, celebrating a BBK mitzvah is a part of the Jewish lifecycle on which the TI community is based. TI strongly encourages students to attend Shabbat morning services on a regular basis prior to their BBK mitzvah. Attending Shabbat services not only facilitates the learning and preparation for your child's role in the service, but also helps your family become connected to the TI community.

THE BBK MITZVAH PROCESS

BBK mitzvah date assignment. In the winter of your child's 5th grade academic year, the Rabbi will send an email to all of the families in your child's BBK mitzvah cohort to initiate the process. The primary purpose of this first communication is to seek family input on your child's BBK mitzvah date. The Rabbi will provide a list of available dates and Torah portions based on your child's 13th birthday on the Hebrew calendar and ask for your preferences.

If you would like information about the subject matter or length of a Torah portion or the haftarah, or special ritual requirements associated with certain dates, please ask the

Rabbi for assistance. After receiving the email, parents submit three possible dates for their BBK mitzvah. BBK mitzvah at TI are normally on Shabbat morning, although under special circumstances a family may also consider a non-Shabbat morning option, such as a mincha (afternoon) or holiday service.

TI tries to accommodate date preferences. If there is a conflict among dates requested, we make every effort to find a mutually agreeable resolution. Please understand that we are not only taking into account the requests of all our families, but also trying to schedule around major Jewish holidays and special Shabbatot.

Note: You should be receiving this email during your child's 5th grade academic year. If you do not receive an email, please contact the Rabbi. If your child is not in 5th grade, but you believe they should be in a BBK cohort either before or after their 5th grade year because of their birth date, please contact the Rabbi.

Orientation Meeting. In the spring of the 5th grade year, the Rabbi will send you an email with your child's assigned BBK Mitzvah date and invite you to a BBK mitzvah cohort orientation meeting. The purpose of this meeting is to introduce everyone to the BBK mitzvah process and to each other! The meeting will be an opportunity to get to know other families with children having their simcha. You will also hear from various people involved in the BBK mitzvah process, including families who have recently gone through the process. This meeting will be a preview of Club BBK, which will run throughout the 6th grade year.

The Rabbi and families from previous BBK mitzvah cohorts will present information on planning BBK mitzvah (i.e., ritual, food, finances, written materials, etc.). Students and their parents are encouraged to attend. At or before this meeting, TI will provide the BBK mitzvah with the following:

- tikkun (a book used for learning to read from the Torah)
- siddur (prayer book)
- booklet with the appropriate maftir (usually the last portion of the 7th aliyah, which is repeated, unless it is a special Shabbat when the maftir portion is read from another scroll)
- haftarah (prophetic reading to accompany the Torah reading for the week).

IMPORTANT: If you change your BBK mitzvah date, you must request a replacement maftir/haftarah booklet.

Building relationships within the BBK cohort can be a rewarding experience for families going through the process together. In addition to providing support and sharing

information, they can help the families and students feel more connected to their Jewish community during this exciting time. At the orientation meeting, we encourage the cohort to select a volunteer to set up a Google group or other listserv to facilitate conversation and social activities.

Club BBK. Club BBK (Bat/Bar/Kabbalat Mitzvah Club), led by the Rabbi, gives the BBK mitzvah students and families the opportunity to form a cohort of friends and to broaden their connections with Judaism. Approximately once a month, the BBK cohort, together with their families, meets on Sunday mornings. The framework of each Sunday session includes participation in Sunday morning minyan and time for light snacks and socializing, followed by a learning session. Topics focus on preparing both students and their families for the bat/bar/kabbalat mitzvah experience, including subjects they should have in their toolbox as adult members of the Jewish community. In addition, all Club BBK students are encouraged to attend at least 25 Shabbat morning services in the year before their simcha. Immediately following the service, the Rabbi spends a few minutes talking to the BBK students about that week's Torah portion.

FINANCIAL OBLIGATIONS

TI account balance. Your TI account balance must be current before your child's BBK mitzvah. This includes BBK mitzvah expenses, which must be paid in advance of the ceremony. We never want financial challenges to interfere with this important life event. If you have a question, or are facing financial challenges, please contact the Executive Director.

BBK mitzvah expenses. There is a non-refundable BBK Mitzvah fee of \$750 which is due upon confirmation of your BBK mitzvah date. The fee helps to cover the costs of Club BBK, including a retreat (congregational or stand alone for Club BBK). It also helps us provide the preparation materials we provide and the staff administrative support that is present throughout the process. Once payment is received, the date is secured. We do not want this fee to cause families financial hardship. If the fee would be a burden to your family, please contact the Rabbi.

PREPARING FOR BBK MITZVAH

At TI, the BBK mitzvah ceremony is part of our regular Shabbat morning service. You and your child have options and opportunities to lead as many or as few elements of the service you like. Some BBK mitzvah lead the entire morning service while others focus on the maftir Torah portion and the haftarah. Many BBK mitzvah have some idea of how much they want to do, while others continue to assess as they prepare.

The opportunities include:

- Maftir - the concluding Torah reading
- Haftarah
- Additional Torah portions
- D'var Torah
- Torah Service
- Musaf
- Shacharit
- Psukei D'Zimra

No one expects your child to take on all of these roles during the service. In consultation with the Rabbi, you and your child will decide how much or how little they feel comfortable taking on.

TI's religious school. The Himmelfarb School curriculum is designed to prepare young people for BBK mitzvah and beyond. Himmelfarb's Kitah Vav (sixth grade) curriculum focuses primarily on ritual involvement in the community. Kitah Vav meets on Sundays. On weeks when there is Club BBK, the Himmelfarb students will return to their regular class following the Club BBK session.

Shabbat service attendance. It is important that the BBK mitzvah and their family be familiar with our sanctuary and our service to help them prepare for their own simcha. All BBK mitzvah are expected to attend 25 Conservative Shabbat morning/holiday services throughout the Himmelfarb school year (September-May), preferably at TI. Students are expected to arrive at TI by 10 a.m. We also encourage regular attendance at Shabbat morning services by parents for the year before BBK mitzvah. If your child attends services elsewhere, please inform the Rabbi so he will be aware of their attendance.

Kitah Zayin (seventh grade) Kitah Zayin marks a new stage in our children's lives as most students celebrate becoming BBK mitzvah. Our education program reflects this new status with a curriculum focusing on mature topics (like Holocaust studies), challenging current events, and Jewish life skills.

Tutors. In addition to ongoing participation in a Jewish educational program, BBK mitzvah require tutoring in order to learn to chant the Torah and haftarah blessings, the maftir, the haftarah, additional Torah readings, and portions of the service. Although each young person has different needs, we recommend that tutoring begin approximately one year before BBK mitzvah to allow sufficient time for preparation, taking into account vacation, illness or other activities that might take time away from studying. The Rabbi maintains a list of approved tutors and he will help you find the best tutor for your child's specific abilities, needs and personality. Tutors are chosen for their knowledge of Torah, familiarity with TI, and our services, in addition to skill in working with BBK mitzvah students. If you wish to select someone who is not on the TI list of approved tutors, the Rabbi must approve the tutor in advance. Similarly, qualified parents who wish to tutor their own children should discuss this option with the Rabbi and obtain approval. A list of approved tutors is included as an addendum to this handbook.

BBK mitzvah retreat. In sixth grade, the BBK mitzvah cohort attends a retreat with special programming to prepare participants for their BBK mitzvah. If the BBK mitzvah retreat coincides with a synagogue wide retreat, we encourage families to attend as well.

Mitzvah projects. During the year leading up to their simcha, all BBK mitzvah students are required to participate in a Mitzvah Project. Your child should choose something that is meaningful and enjoyable to them. Past projects have included: tutoring Shepherd Elementary School students, preparing casseroles for So Others Might Eat, holding a blood drive, teaching seniors how to use a computer, volunteering a social service organization, etc. Volunteering at the synagogue is also a great project! We encourage students to select an activity in which they get directly involved, rather than requesting the donation of items for recipients they may never meet. For advice in choosing a Mitzvah Project, contact the Director of Lifelong Learning.

Meetings with the Rabbi. Parents are responsible for scheduling at least three meetings with the Rabbi, as follows:

- At least one year prior to the BBK mitzvah. The Rabbi will discuss the meaning of becoming BBK mitzvah with the child and parents, confirm Torah and haftarah readings, review any special requirements for the date, discuss tutoring plans, and answer questions. If you are an interfaith family, the Rabbi will work with you to help include non-Jewish family members in the service. For those who need assistance choosing a tutor, the first meeting should be 14 months prior to BBK mitzvah.

- No later than three months prior to the BBK mitzvah. The Rabbi will assess your child's ability to recite their portion and check in on progress on other areas of participation in the service. If parents plan to have family members or friends lead parts of the service or read Torah, they should plan to talk to the Rabbi about these assignments at this time. The student should be prepared to discuss their thoughts on the Torah portion with the Rabbi. At this point, they should tell the Rabbi whether the student will give a d'var torah during the service. The Rabbi may discuss plans for tzedakah in connection with your simcha. You should bring the following to this meeting: 1) any materials the child is using to prepare and 2) the "Shabbat Participants and Honors" at the back of this Handbook.
- Two months prior to the BBK mitzvah. Approximately two months prior to the BBK Mitzvah, the Rabbi and the student will meet to discuss the Parasha and begin preparations for a dvar Torah. The Rabbi will also meet with the parents to answer any questions as the BBK mitzvah approaches.

THE CEREMONY

Rehearsals. A couple of weeks before the simcha, parents should contact the Synagogue Administrator, in the TI office, and the Rabbi to schedule a rehearsal time in the Wolman Sanctuary to familiarize everyone with the choreography of the service and the physical layout of the facility. If your student's tutor is not thoroughly familiar with our service, please contact the Synagogue Administrator no later than three weeks before the rehearsal so she can help arrange for someone who is familiar with Tifereth Israel's sanctuary and practices to assist. In some cases, families will schedule a second rehearsal in the sanctuary.

Shabbat morning service. In addition to participation by the BBK mitzvah, we encourage participation by family and friends who are qualified to read portions of the Torah or lead parts of the service. When thinking about parts for family and friends, please keep in mind that participants need to have the necessary skills for participation. Please work with the Rabbi on which parts of the service and which Torah reading the BBK mitzvah or honorees of the family will be leading.

D'var Torah. Students are encouraged to share a short D'var Torah, a teaching from their Torah portion, immediately preceding the Torah service. Typically the D'var Torah is a 3-5 minute discussion on a particular aspect of the portion that your child finds interesting. The Rabbi will work with your child to help them prepare their D'var Torah. Students interested in sharing a D'var Torah should tell the Rabbi no later than the meeting three months before the event.

Torah reading. Anyone who wants to read a Torah portion needs to have the skill to do so and prepare sufficiently. BBK mitzvah will work with their tutor to prepare for reading Torah. Please notify anyone else you invite to read that at TI we read directly from the Torah scroll and that we read the entire portion, *not* the triennial portion. The Rabbi may want to hear friends and family members read Torah in advance of your simcha to ensure that they are able to do their part successfully.

Aliyot/reciting blessings for Torah reading. Like the Torah readers, those called to recite blessings before and after a Torah portion need to practice sufficiently to recite the Hebrew words correctly. The Rabbi will gladly instruct any aliyah recipient to read or chant the blessings. We recommend sending a copy of the prayers and an audio recording to aliyah recipients well in advance of the service. Copies of the prayers are at the end of this Handbook and you can find a recording of the blessings at <https://tiferethdc.shulcloud.com/mp3s.html>. In addition, the blessing will also be up on the Torah reading table in Hebrew and transliteration to assist those having an aliyah. Please note that at TI the first two aliyot are given to a Kohen and a Levi, respectively. Do not worry if you do not have a Kohen or a Levi for these aliyot. The floor gabbai will assign a Kohen and Levi from the congregation.

Service leaders. Anyone who wants to lead a part of the service also needs to have the skill to do so and be sufficiently prepared. We have recordings of some parts of the service online, as well as volunteers who can help individuals prepare for this role. Friends and family members sometimes lead the early part of the service (Shacharit) and, when the BBK Mitzvah do not lead the Torah service or Musaf, these also may be available for others to lead. Often, younger siblings may lead or assist BBK mitzvah in leading Ashrei and/or concluding songs of the service. Many BBK mitzvah also choose to invite their religious school or camp friends to help lead the concluding songs.

There are also a few short readings in Hebrew and English (Prayer for Our Country, Prayer for Israel and Prayer for Peace) that may be read by other guests.

Hagbah (Torah lifting). Hagbah, or Torah lifting, may be challenging to assign because it is extremely important that the person lifting the Torah handle it in a secure and respectful manner. If you want to assign Hagbah to a relative or guest who is not experienced with lifting, please arrange with the Rabbi for the person to have a practice session to determine if they are capable of this honor. If you do not have someone to do each item on the list (especially hagbah), the floor gabbai will assign an experienced TI congregant.

Blessings for the BBK mitzvah. As the BBK mitzvah reads the prayer after the haftarah, the floor gabbai will help family and friends distribute candy to the congregation. At the end of the prayer, the congregation celebrates the BBK mitzvah by throwing candy. TI provides kosher (and soft!) candy for this purpose. Please contact the office to make sure that the candy is ready before Shabbat.

Next, the Rabbi will offer blessings for the BBK mitzvah and will invite the parents to read two blessings. Those blessings can be found at the end of this handbook.

Drash. At TI, the main drash (sermon) is used as a time to teach Torah. Typically, the Rabbi will speak to the BBK mitzvah and then deliver the drash. Often a parent or other family member of the BBK will deliver the drash. If a family member or a friend of the family has the skill and knowledge to teach Torah, they may talk to the Rabbi about delivering the drash. The drash must be focused on the Torah portion, however, and cannot be about your child. Contact the Rabbi one year in advance to allow for planning and coordination if you want someone other than him to deliver the drash.

Assigning honors. Every effort will be made to honor relatives and friends of the family with an opportunity to participate in the service. We generally assign about 15 honors, including opening and closing the Ark; carrying the Torah; seven or more aliyot; and lifting, dressing and putting away the Torah. Generally, we prefer that each person be given a single honor.

Please note that there may be other lifecycle rituals happening on the same date as your BBK mitzvah. For example, it is possible that one of the aliyot will be assigned to a couple for their aufruf or for a baby naming. The Rabbi will let you know as soon as possible if this is the case.

The family must complete the Shabbat Participants and Honors Form at the end of this handbook. Copies of this are also available in electronic form. In addition to the English names of everyone participating in the service, please fill out Hebrew names of those assigned aliyot. Parents must submit the form to the Rabbi at least two months before the event and to the Synagogue Administrator at least two weeks in advance. There is no obligation to fill all the honors or readings (i.e., Prayer for the Country, Prayer for Israel, Prayer for Peace, etc.). The congregation is prepared to fill any roles not covered by your family and friends. However, you must commit to the honors you have assigned unless there is a family emergency.

Inclusion of a non-Jewish family members. As you fill the honor sheet, please ask Rabbi Werbow if you have any questions, especially around the inclusion of non-Jewish family members. Non-Jewish family members are welcome to participate on the bima as they join with a Jewish participant. In addition, there are roles where they can participate on their own (Prayer for the Country, Prayer for Israel, Prayer for Peace).

Shabbat handouts. Each Shabbat, TI provides a handout for service attendees that includes a list of service leaders and announcements of upcoming events. Most families also prepare a special handout that serves as an introduction and guide to the service for their simcha. If you prepare your own handout, the Synagogue Administrator will provide you with an electronic sample from other BBK mitzvah that you may use to create your own handout. You will need to submit a draft to the Synagogue Administrator for review at least two weeks in advance of your simcha.

In addition to our regular handouts, there are blue notebooks in some seat back book holders throughout the sanctuary for people who may not be familiar with a traditional Shabbat morning service. These notebooks include a detailed explanation of the service, as well as transliterations of many prayers. We also have transliteration booklets available in some seat backs.

Flowers. If BBK mitzvah families wish to purchase a fresh floral arrangement, they are welcome to do so.

Resources. If desired, your family can be assigned a mentor who is familiar with the BBK mitzvah process at TI. Mentors will be from families who have recently gone through the BBK mitzvah experience. Your mentor can supply information about the many details of planning a simcha. They will also occasionally check in with you to make sure that everything is on track. Feel free to call them at any time! We hope that, in turn, you might become a mentor for future BBK mitzvah families.

ACCESSIBILITY

Parking. TI is wheelchair accessible via a ramp at the Juniper Street entrance. If requested in advance, we will reserve a parking space near the building.

Assistive listening devices. We use microphones on Shabbat. Our assistive listening devices work through the microphone system to make the service accessible to congregants who have difficulty hearing. There are assistive listening devices in a basket inside the entrance of the sanctuary.

Bimah lift, elevator and ramp. There is a lift from the floor level of the Wolman Sanctuary to the bimah. Please let us know in advance if any guests will use the lift so that we can make appropriate arrangements for their comfort. After the service, there is elevator access to the Cherner Auditorium, where the Kiddish is normally held, for anyone who does not wish to use the stairs. A ramp provides access to the lower “well” of the Cherner Auditorium.

GIFTS AND TZEDAKAH

What would a simcha be without presents? During the service, the Rabbi will present several items from the congregation:

- An *Etz Hayim Torah and Commentary* with a dedicated bookplate to be given to your child
- A certificate suitable for framing
- A book for the Mollie Lewis Berch Library donated by the Paul and Annetta Himmelfarb Foundation in honor of your child’s simcha
- A charitable donation to one of several social justice organizations from the Social Action Committee in honor of your simcha
- A tzedakah box from Kol Nashim

Much as it is enjoyable to receive, giving tzedakah is an important teaching of Judaism and BBK mitzvah are excellent occasions to fulfill this mitzvah. Whether as a part of their service project or in another way, tzedakah can be a meaningful part of becoming a BBK mitzvah. BBK mitzvah may also demonstrate their understanding of tzedakah by choosing to donate some of the money received as gifts to an appropriate charitable organization, a TI fund, or project at TI. If BBK mitzvah or family members are interested in contributing to TI, a list of some options is included on page 18 of the handbook.

CELEBRATORY MEALS

Kiddish. The meal that accompanies BBK mitzvah, weddings, baby namings, or other lifecycle observances is a seudat mitzvah, a religiously commanded festive meal. There is something special about being part of a community and sharing your simcha and festive meal with that community. At TI all BBK Mitzvah families are expected to sponsor a Shabbat Kiddish to share with the TI community. Even if you have a catered lunch outside the synagogue for your invited guests, you are required to sponsor the weekly Shabbat Kiddish for the congregation. Please speak to the Executive Director if you are facing financial challenges and this would be a hardship for you.

TI catered meals. The synagogue offers a range of choices for celebration from a simple buffet to a full-catered luncheon after the service. When planning the Kiddish, you will work with the Kitchen Manager and Synagogue Administrator to discuss the meal and the expected number of congregants and invited guests. Details for the costs of sponsoring a Kiddish are provided in an addendum later in this handbook.

Outside caterers. The vast majority of Kiddish luncheons at TI are catered by our Kitchen Manager. Outside caterers must be willing to follow the synagogue's standards of kashrut. A summary of the congregation's kashrut policy is in the following section. Families not using in-house catering must meet with the Synagogue Administrator six months before the date of their BBK mitzvah to make Kiddish plans. Please note that there is a kitchen rental fee and other charges associated with using an outside caterer. Also, TI's Kitchen Manager oversees all use of the kitchen.

Families do-it-yourself. If you do not wish to use TI's cooks or an outside caterer, your family may choose to volunteer in the TI kitchen with all food preparations overseen by the Kitchen Manager. All food preparation must be done at the synagogue, using strictly kosher ingredients and food ordered from an approved purveyor. Also, either the Kitchen Manager or someone approved by the Kitchen Manager must serve as mashgiach for all food preparation. There will be a charge for these services. The Kitchen Manager can give you tips about planning your menu and will ensure that quantities are sufficient for the number of guests expected for your simcha. While this directly puts the cost of food for a Kiddish in your hands, there will still be other charges from the congregation that help support the Kiddish.

Kashrut policy.

1. Any caterer with a mashgiach approved by the Rabbi may cater or cook at TI.
2. Only caterers with a mashgiach approved by the Rabbi may bring in food cooked elsewhere.
3. A caterer whose mashgiach is not approved by the Rabbi must do all cooking in our building under the supervision of the Kitchen Manager, using TI utensils and approved Kosher ingredients.
4. There must be a TI mashgiach present at all times when a caterer is using the TI kitchen.
5. Members of our synagogue community may use the kitchen, subject to appropriate kashrut supervision, including the presence of a mashgiach at all times.
6. No food may be cooked on Shabbat; warming of previously cooked food is allowed.
7. No homemade food may be served at TI.

Following the Kiddish. Birkat Hamazon, the blessings after the meal, is recited at the conclusion of every Kiddish meal. Often, this is done by a small group of people in one part of the room. The BBK mitzvah or family members are encouraged to lead this prayer. Alternatively, the Rabbi or a congregant can do so. The synagogue provides books that include Birkat Hamazon. Although not common, there is possibility, after the conclusion of the Kiddish luncheon to have musical instruments or electronic music on Shabbat. Any music played on Shabbat must be Jewish. Acoustic music may begin after 1:30 p.m., electronic music after 2:00 p.m. The Synagogue Administrator is available to discuss music issues.

Other meals. We encourage you to consider renting space at TI for Friday Shabbat dinner, Saturday evening parties and a Sunday brunch in connection with your simcha. Please work with the Synagogue Administrator at least one year in advance to arrange rentals, which are subject to space availability. The costs of having a dinner or party at TI are included in an addendum at the end of this handbook. Families are encouraged to attend Friday evening Kabbalat Shabbat services the night before their BBK mitzvah. Coming to services and sharing a family Shabbat meal is a wonderful way to start this special weekend! You may want to bring family and guests and follow up with dinner catered by the synagogue. Families are also welcome to have a party or brunch at TI.

HOW TO PLAN IN ACCORDANCE WITH TI SHABBAT CUSTOMS

Observance of all aspects of Shabbat is central to our community life at TI. In accordance with Jewish tradition, we observe Shabbat as a day for relaxation, prayer, and joy. Traditional Jews also refrain from 39 categories of activity, paralleling God's ceasing to work on the seventh day of creation. Among these traditionally prohibited activities are lighting fires, cooking, writing or making a permanent record, and carrying things from one domain to another (i.e., into or out of buildings that are not within the same eruv [a ritual enclosure that exists in some Jewish communities]). No public violation of Shabbat and holidays will be permitted at TI.

Specifically, this means that from sundown Friday until after nightfall Saturday:

- All items used for BBK mitzvah ceremonies or celebrations, including food and decorations, may not be brought into or removed from the synagogue. Any items to be used during Shabbat must be dropped off at the synagogue by noon on Friday and picked up after Shabbat, as arranged with the TI office.
- Photography and sound recording are prohibited in the synagogue. Families who wish to take pictures can arrange to do so before or after the day of their BBK mitzvah.

Contact the Synagogue Administrator to schedule a time during the week to stage photographs in the sanctuary.

- All cell phones and all other electronic devices must be turned off, and no telephones may be used in the building except in case of emergency.
- Smoking is not allowed on synagogue property at any time.
- If arrangements were made with the Kitchen Manager for the family to take home leftover food from a Shabbat dinner or Kiddish, that food must be picked up after Shabbat as arranged with the Kitchen Manager and TI office staff.
- If you have guests who require Shabbat home hospitality within walking distance of TI, please contact the Rabbi. We are usually able to find suitable housing.

BBK MITZVAH ARE JUST THE BEGINNING . . .

After their special day, we encourage celebrants to continue conducting services, reading from the Torah, chanting haftarah, and hopefully sharing words of Torah in years to come. We also encourage them to continue to participate in Jewish learning at TI through participation in our teen programs. We expect and strongly encourage young people to make a commitment to continuing Jewish education after their BBK mitzvah year. Please contact the Rabbi or our Director of Lifelong Learning for information about the synagogue's post-BBK mitzvah educational programs.

ADDENDUM 1 - CONTACT PEOPLE

Rabbi Michael Werbow 202-882-1605 x302 mwerbow@tifereth-israel.org	Rabbi Kelley Gludt Education Director 202-882-1605 x305 rabbikelley@tifereth-israel.org	Jevera Temsky Executive Director 202-882-1605 x301 tiexec@tifereth-israel.org
Sheri Blonder Synagogue Administrator 301-882-1605 x304 tiadmin@tifereth-israel.org	Francie Kranzberg Kitchen Manager 202-882-1605 x301 francie@tifereth-israel.org	

ADDENDUM 2 - APPROVED TUTORS

Name	Email	Phone	Past Students (partial list)	Location
Seth Glabman*	iangla@verizon.net	301-681-4627	Isaac Snow Adam Perera	Silver Spring
Myrna Goldman*	myrnagold@hotmail.com	301-588-2512	Shira Lister Wally Osborne Deborah Secular	Silver Spring (near TI)
Cynthia Peterman*	cynp25@gmail.com	301-384-7277	Ari Hovis Afflerbach Esther Feron	Silver Spring (far from TI)
Stephanie Rubin* (best to call, not send email)	rubisteph@gmail.com	301-587-2868	Jacob Douglas Jonas Laufer Julius Cohen	Silver Spring (near TI)
Rabbah Arlene Berger	rabbaharlene@gmail.com	301-529-9725	Sonya Weiner Liat Levone Andi Gunther Aviva Blumenthal	
Marilyn Fine	jmrt@juno.com	301-649-4476	Oliver Held Noah Grabel	Kemp Mill
Yael Meirovich Uhr	yaeluhr@gmail.com	301-318-5798	Nava Klar	
Rabbi Yaffa-Shira Sultan	yseps@me.com	215-380-6068	Rafi Berman	

* TI regular who is familiar with TI service choreography

ADDENDUM 3 - BBK MITZVAH PREPARATION CHECKLIST

Note: Deadlines are the approximate amount of time prior to the BBK mitzvah date.

<u>Deadline</u>	<u>Activity</u>
15 months	Schedule 1st meeting with the Rabbi.
14 months	1st meeting with Rabbi: Discuss meaning of BBK Mitzvah, confirm Torah and Haftarah readings, and discuss tutoring plans. Bring your Maftir/Haftarah booklet to this meeting.
13 months	Finalize arrangements for a tutor. Begin thinking of a mitzvah project to be done during the year leading up to your BBK Mitzvah.
12 months	Begin tutoring. Tutor's name: Finalize <i>mitzvah</i> project. Project description: _____ Begin (if not already) to attend Shabbat morning services regularly.
6 months	Discuss with Kitchen Manager plans for Kiddish lunch and any other meals to be held at Tifereth Israel or prepared by Tifereth Israel (i.e., Friday night dinner, Saturday night party, Sunday morning brunch). Schedule Friday night dinner, Saturday night party, Sunday morning brunch with Synagogue Administrator if to be held at TI. Schedule 2nd meeting with Rabbi. Make decisions about who will participate in the Bar/Bat Mitzvah morning service, especially anyone who will read Torah. Prepare "Shabbat Participants and Honors" form with this information.
3 - 6 months	2nd meeting with Rabbi: Bring Shabbat Participation Form and the maftir/haftarah booklet. Rabbi will assess child's preparation and review forms. Begin discussion of Torah and haftarah readings. If you want someone other than the Rabbi to do the drash, discuss what is needed for the Rabbi to approve a drash. Discuss Torah readers who have not previously read Torah at TI with the Rabbi. Schedule final meeting with Rabbi and schedule date to lead Ashrei prior to BBK Mitzvah.
3 months	BBK Mitzvah and parent(s) prepare questions about parsha and haftarah to discuss with the Rabbi at the 3rd meeting. BBK Mitzvah prepares an article for the <i>Menorah</i> .

2 months	<p>Schedule rehearsal(s) in Sanctuary with Synagogue Administrator so family and child can go over choreography of service. If the tutor is not a regular at Tifereth Israel, someone more familiar with the TI service must be present.</p> <p>Finalize plans with the Kitchen Manager for Kiddish lunch and any other meals to be held at Tifereth Israel or prepared by Tifereth Israel..</p> <p>Submit article (with photo) to the <i>Menorah</i>.</p> <p>Order kippot if desired; inform the office whether or not you are ordering Kippot.</p> <p>Begin to prepare a booklet and finalize "Shabbat Participants and Honors" form.</p>
5 weeks	<p>BBK Mitzvah submits questions about parsha and haftarah readings to discuss with Rabbi at 3rd meeting.</p>
4 weeks	<p>3rd meeting with Rabbi: Bring maftir/haftarah booklet, Shabbat Participation Form, draft of booklet, and questions about parsha to discuss readings in depth with the Rabbi. The Rabbi will assess the child's preparations.</p> <p>Provide final draft of booklet and "Shabbat Participants and Honors" form to the Rabbi and Administrator for review.</p>
2 weeks	<p>Finalize number of guests for all meals prepared at TI.</p>
1 weeks	<p>Practice for BBK Mitzvah in sanctuary.</p>
3 days	<p>Drop off any special items that will be used at TI during Shabbat, such as kippot, wine, centerpieces, decorations, etc.. Please note that these types of items may not be brought to TI during Shabbat.</p>

ADDENDUM 4 – DONATIONS TO TIFERETH ISRAEL

GENERAL DONATIONS

A **General Donation** helps TI to cover day-to-day operating expenses: the Rabbi, educators, staff, building operations; and programs such as High Holiday and Shabbat youth services, holiday activities, and adult education. A general donation also subsidizes the costs of running TI's Himmelfarb School.

General donations are always welcome, and can be made via ShulCloud or by contacting the TI office.

Here are some ways to mark a general donation in a loved one's honor or memory:

- **Tree of Life Commemorative Plaque** – Purchase a leaf (\$180), a rock (\$1800) or a cloud (\$720) on the Tree of Life on the stairway landing near the Juniper Street lobby.
- **Bookplate** – At holidays and special occasions, our thoughts turn to those who have meaning in our lives. Dedicate an *Etz Hayim Torah and Commentary* (\$72), a *Siddur Sim Shalom* (\$36), or a *Mahzor Lev Shalem* (\$54).
- **Sanctuary Seat** – Dedicate a Sanctuary seat plate (\$250).
- **Yahrzeit Plaque** – Plaques are lit annually on the *yahrzeit* (anniversary date of the individual's death), and during *yizkor* services. Contact the TI office for the cost.

DONATIONS TO FUNDS

A **directed gift** provides resources for important educational projects, building needs, ritual objects and tikkun olam. Here are some of the special funds at TI. For more information, go to the donation page on ShulCloud:

- **A. Nathan Abramowitz Fund** – for Israel program and Jewish camp scholarships
- **Accessibility Fund** – for maintenance and improvements for those with disabilities
- **George Greenberg Building Preservation Fund** – for long-term building maintenance and improvements
- **Helping Hands Fund** – for support to congregants in times of need
- **Himmelfarb Fund** – for enrichment activities and special treats for Himmelfarb students
- **Marcia F. Goldberg Memorial Scholar-in-Residence Fund** – for special speaker programs
- **Marvin Caplan Social Action Fund** – for holiday outreach to the needy and tzedakah
- **Mollie L. Berch Library Fund** – for purchase of books and items needed for the library
- **Torah Repair Fund** – for maintenance and purchase of ritual objects
- **Rabbi's Discretionary Fund** – for many good causes including congregants in financial distress

ADDENDUM 5 – CATERING INFORMATION

Kiddush sponsorship

Tifereth Israel asks all families to sponsor the Shabbat Kiddush on the day of their b'nai mitzvah for the congregation and their guests. We anticipate around 100 members in attendance each week, and the number of b'nai mitzvah family guests (anyone invited by the family who does not regularly attend TI Shabbat morning services) tends to range from 50 to 150 additional people. In 2023 the cost of a Kiddush generally ranged between \$12 and \$25 per person.

(100 members + 50 guests) x \$12 per person = \$1,800

(100 members + 150 guests) x \$25 per person = \$6,250

At least one month prior to the event, we ask everyone to make a deposit of \$1500 toward the Kiddush, with full payment expected two weeks prior to the Kiddush. Any additional expenses will be due the week following the event.

Financial need

If fully sponsoring a Kiddush and/or making the full deposit is not possible for your family, please speak with the Executive Director – we can always work out a solution that fits the synagogue's and your family's needs.

Limiting costs

Volunteering

Some families try to reduce costs a little by volunteering in the kitchen. While the Kitchen Manager is happy to work with families who want to help prepare food for their Kiddush, all cooking must be done at TI under her supervision. The Kitchen Manager serves as the *mashgiach*, and ensures that enough food is prepared for the number of attendees. Volunteering helps reduce labor costs but does not eliminate them. All food for the Kiddush will be purchased by the Kitchen Manager to maintain kashrut levels in the synagogue, unless agreed upon by the Kitchen Manager in advance. The cost of a Kiddush can be reduced by about \$1 per person through volunteering in the kitchen.

Menu choices

When determining the price per person for a Kiddush, please note that the Kitchen Manager can give the price per person for a complete menu but cannot give item by item prices. This is because the number of items in a menu has an impact on the cost of each -- The more items served, the less of each item is needed. For example, if a meal consists of only baked pasta we will need far more pasta than if it is served with three or four other items like bagels, quiche, hard boiled eggs, and green salad. The Kitchen Manager will work with you to create a menu that is within your budget.

Payment options

Tifereth Israel understands that most families cannot pay for the full sponsorship of a Kiddush all at once. We are happy to work out monthly or other payment plans with you, so you can have a portion of the event paid for in advance. Please speak to the Administrator about these arrangements – Sheri@tifereth-israel.org, (202) 882 – 1605 x304.

Sample Kiddush Menus

Please note: The menus below are based on 2023 prices and assume use of compostable dinnerware. Actual prices will fluctuate based on the market, inflation, etc. There is an additional charge of \$1.50 per person for use of glass dishes and stainless steel flatware.

Menu 1	\$12/person	Menu 2	\$15/person	Menu 3	\$20/person
Drinks: Coffee/Tea/Hot Chocolate Lemonade/Water		Drinks: Coffee/Tea/Hot Chocolate Lemonade/Water		Drinks: Coffee/Tea/Hot Chocolate Lemonade/Water	
Food: Option of two of the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Egg Salad • Tuna Salad • Pasta Salad • Cheese Platter Crudit� (carrots, celery, etc.) with hummus Tossed Salad Choice of: Whole Wheat, Rye, White, or Multigrain Bread or Rolls		Food: Bagels with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cream Cheese • Lox Spread • Cucumbers • Onions • Sliced Tomatoes Egg Salad Tossed Salad Quiches – Assorted		Food: Assorted Premium Bagels with: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cream Cheese • Lox • Capers • Cucumbers • Onions • Sliced Tomatoes Whitefish Salad Tossed Salad Quiches – Assorted Seasonal Fresh Vegetable(s)	
Desserts: Fresh Fruit Assorted Cookies and Pastries		Desserts: Fresh Fruit Assorted Cookies and Pastries		Desserts: Fresh Fruit Platter Assorted Cookies and Pastries Ice Cream Sundae Bar	

Menu 4	\$15/person	Menu 5	\$18/person	Menu 6	\$20/person
Drinks: Coffee/Tea/Hot Chocolate Lemonade/Water		Drinks: Coffee/Tea/Hot Chocolate Lemonade/Water		Drinks: Coffee/Tea/Hot Chocolate Lemonade/Water	
Food: Assorted Breads and Rolls Tomato or Broccoli Soup Assorted Grilled Cheese Sandwiches: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Plain • Caramelized Onion • Roasted Red Pepper • Saut�ed Mushroom Greek or Caesar Salad Tossed Salad Veggies and Chips with Dips .		Food: Corn Bread Taco Bar: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Flour and Corn Tortillas • Black Beans • Chopped Tomatoes • Chopped Lettuce • Shredded Cheese • Salsa • Guacamole • Sour Cream White Rice Spanish Rice Corn Salad Tossed Salad		Food: Pita Falafel Bar: Falafel and the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hummus • Tahini • Eggplant Salad or Baba Ghanoush • Israeli Salad • Israeli Olives and Pickles Stuffed Grape Leaves Grilled Vegetables Greek Salad Tossed Salad	
Desserts: Fresh Fruit Assorted Cookies and Pastries		Desserts: Fresh Fruit Assorted Cookies and Pastries		Desserts: Fresh Fruit Assorted Cookies and Pastries	

ADDENDUM 6 - SHABBAT PARTICIPATION FORM

(A Fillable form will be sent to you electronically)

General Information

Shabbat/Torah portion: _____ Date: _____

Name of BBK Mitzvah: _____

Tutor: _____

Parents: _____

Grandparents: _____

Siblings: _____

Roles

Note: Each person may only have one honor. You do not need to fill every slot on this form. The floor gabbai will find a member of the congregation to perform any honors that are unassigned.

Greeter (must be a TI congregant): _____

Floor Gabbai (from the TI list): _____

Order of Service

Psukei D'Zimrah (page 65): _____

Shacharit (page 105): _____

Torah Service (page 139): _____

Bimah Gabbaim

Rishon (must be a TI congregant): _____

Sheini (can be the tutor) : _____

Opening and Closing Ark at beginning of the Torah Service (can be 1 or 2 people):

1. _____

2. _____

Torah Carrier 1: _____

Torah Carrier 2 (only if special Maftir): _____

Hagbah (lifting) Torah 1: _____

G'lilah (wrapping) Torah 1: _____

Hagbah Torah 2 (only if special Maftir): _____

G'lilah Torah 2 (only if special Maftir): _____

Candy Distributors (3 school-aged children):

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

After the Drash (page 148)

The following three prayers are optional for inclusion in the service. The *Prayer for the Country* and the *Prayer for Peace* are read in English; the *Prayer for Israel* is usually read in Hebrew.

Prayer for the Country: _____

Prayer for Israel: _____

Prayer for Peace: _____

Announce New Month (if in the coming week): _____

Ashrei: _____

Opening and Closing Ark at end of Torah Service (can be 1 or 2 people):

1. _____

2. _____

Torah Carrier 1: _____

Torah Carrier 2 (only if special Maftir): _____

Musaf: _____

Closing Prayers

Ein Kelohenu: _____

Aleynu: _____

Al Keyn: _____

Adon Olam: _____

Kiddush, Hand Washing, Motzi (page 315) (Bar/Bat Mitzvah): _____

ALIYOT

Cohen Aliyah

English Name(s): _____

Hebrew Name(s): _____

Reader: _____

Levi Aliyah

English Name(s): _____

Hebrew Name(s): _____

Reader: _____

Third Aliyah

English Name(s): _____

Hebrew Name(s): _____

Reader: _____

Fourth Aliyah

English Name(s): _____

Hebrew Name(s): _____

Reader: _____

Fifth Aliyah

English Name(s): _____

Hebrew Name(s): _____

Reader: _____

Sixth Aliyah

English Name(s): _____

Hebrew Name(s): _____

Reader: _____

Seventh Aliyah (usually the parents)

English Name(s): _____

Hebrew Name(s): _____

Reader: _____

Maftir

English Name (Bar/Bat Mitzvah): _____

Hebrew Name: (Bar/Bat Mitzvah): _____

Reader: _____

Haftarah (Bar/Bat Mitzvah): _____

ADDENDUM 7 - THE PARENT'S PRAYER

The Parents' Prayer

(usually recited when the rabbi is giving gifts and blessings)

For all:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם, שֶׁהַחַיִּינוּ וְקִיָּמָנוּ וְהִגִּיעָנוּ לְזֶמַּן הַזֶּה.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam,
shehecheyanu v'kiy'manu v'higi-anu laz'man hazeh.

Two parents with a boy:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁפִּטְרָנוּ מֵעֲנָשׁוֹ שֶׁל זֶה.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, sheh-pi-ta-rá-nu may-on-shó shel zeh.

Two parents with a girl:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁפִּטְרָנוּ מֵעֲנָשָׁה שֶׁל זֹ.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, sheh-pi-ta-rá-nu may-on-shá shel zo.

One parent with a boy:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁפִּטְרָנִי מֵעֲנָשׁוֹ שֶׁל זֶה.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, sheh-pi-ta-rá-ni may-on-shó shel zeh.

One parent with a girl:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁפִּטְרָנִי מֵעֲנָשָׁה שֶׁל זֹ.

Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, sheh-pi-ta-rá-ni may-on-shá shel zo.

One parent with a non-gendered child:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁפִּטְרָנִי מִהֶעֱנֵשׁ שֶׁל ____ (Insert Name) ____
Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, sheh-pi-ta-rá-ni m-ha-ones shel ____ (Insert Name).

Two parents with a non-gendered child:

בָּרוּךְ אַתָּה ה' אֱ-לֹהֵינוּ מֶלֶךְ הָעוֹלָם שֶׁפִּטְרָנוּ מִהֶעֱנֵשׁ שֶׁל ____ (Insert Name) ____
Baruch atah Adonai eloheinu melech ha-olam, sheh-pi-ta-rá-nu m-ha-ones shel ____ (Insert Name).

A loose translation for all of the above:

God of blessing has exempted me (us) from the obligations of this child.

ADDENDUM 8 – BOOKS & RESOURCES

[The Mitzvah Project Book: Making Mitzvah Part of your Bar/Bat Mitzvah and Your Life](#)

by Liz Suneby & Diane Heiman

[Bar Bat Mitzvah Basics-A Practical Family Guide to Coming of Age Together](#)

Cantor Helen Leneman

[Putting God on the Guest List-How to Reclaim the Spiritual Meaning of Your Child's Bar or Bat Mitzvah](#)

Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin

[Make Your Own Bar/Bat Mitzvah-A Personal Approach to Creating a Meaningful Rite of Passage](#)

Rabbi Goldie Milgram

[Then J Girl's Guide](#)

Penina Adelman, Ali Feldman & Shulamit Reinharz (Second Edition)

[A Spiritual Journey: The Bar Mitzvah and Bat Mitzvah Handbook](#)

Behrman House

[Surviving Your Bar/Bat Mitzvah](#)

Cantor Matt Axelrod

Parsha Resources

[Text Messages: A Torah Commentary for Teens](#)

Edited by Rabbi Jeffrey Salkin

[The Bedside Torah](#)

Rabbi Bradley Shavit Artson

- Notes -